THE WILL OF GOD
AND
A MAN'S LIFEWORK

HENRY B. WRIGHT

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THE
WILL OF GOD
AND A MAN'S
LIFEWORK

HENRY B. WRIGHT

"Christ is . . . . the true, the living way of access to God. Give up yourselves therefore to him with a cordial confidence and the great work of life is done."

TIMOTHY DWIGHT, *Baccalaureate Sermon*, at Yale in 1814.

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To

MY FATHER *and* MY MOTHER

PREFACE

These studies were originally prepared by laymen to meet the needs of students in the Association Bible Classes for Seniors of the Academic and Scientific Departments of Yale University. It was hoped that they might prove helpful in giving to young men about to enter upon their life work in many different professions a conception of the highest ideals which these careers could embrace.

Largely as a result of the failure to distinguish clearly between the decision to do God's will and the act of volunteering there exists among many college students today an erroneous impression that the doing of God's will is synonymous solely with the Clerical and Missionary careers. The call of God is popularly interpreted as a call to the Professional Ministry; Law, Business, Teaching, Medicine, Engineering and like professions are distinguished as secular. They are regarded as fields into which man may enter without relation to God's will—realms in which more latitude is allowed to the individual in personal morals and in manner of life, and within which he is largely released from responsibility for the advancement of the Kingdom of God.

Jesus Christ and his Apostles, however, entertained no such conception of the so-called "secular" professions. Our Lord and his followers were themselves laymen, not members of the professional clergy of the day. To them all honorable careers were ministries and service in these so-called "secular" careers seemed to them to demand not less, but more, consecration to God than the organized church required of its leaders.

This great truth, which more than any other was the secret of the mighty advances of Christianity in the first centuries, has been long obscured; but during the last decade more than at any other time it has been rediscovered and applied in America and the result has been a great leavening and purification of our public and private life. Professor

Peabody's "Jesus Christ and the Social Question" and Professor Jenks' "Studies in the Political and Social Significance of the Life and Teaching of Jesus"—the method of which has been largely followed in these outlines—are noteworthy in this regard. Other studies which are to follow on the significance of the teaching of Jesus and his Apostles to the Physician, to the Teacher, to the Lawyer, as well as a course on the scientific significance of Jesus' teaching, will do much to spread and apply the great and vital truth still further.

The present outlines are a modest attempt to give a basis in experience for all such practical and more general applications of Christianity to modern life. They do not, for an instant, seek to discredit the preaching ministry at home or abroad to which all other careers must ever look for higher leadership and inspiration. But they do insist and strive to demonstrate that this career is not the only field of human activity in which God's will may be done fully and completely. Every young man in America today ought undoubtedly to subscribe to the declaration, "I will be a clergyman at home or abroad *if God so directs.*" But just as surely should he at the same time subscribe to the declaration, "I will be a doctor, lawyer, business man, teacher, or what not, at home or abroad, *if God so directs.*" The first declaration alone is not absolute but partial surrender to God's will. Only the two together comprise unconditional enlistment in God's service.

To make clear the great fact of God's will and its part in human life in a set of studies is no easy task, for the underlying truth is one of the most difficult in the world of ideas to grasp. Even when clearly apprehended by the individual, it is wellnigh impossible of demonstration by him to others as a mere intellectual proposition. It is a truth which must be imparted, not taught. Drummond fully realized this when he wrote: "The end of life is to do God's will. Now that is a great and surprising revelation. No man ever found that out. It has been before the world these eighteen hundred years yet few have even found it out today." If only partially apprehended it is capable of the most grotesque and dangerous distortion, especially regarding the gifts

promised as the issues of obedience. There exists, however, a wide and for the most part sane literature on the general subject and on its particular phases which has never been brought together and arranged for daily study. These outlines attempt to systematize and render usable to students the material already at hand rather than to make any original contribution to the subject itself. Hence the copious quotations from previous writers.

To nearly fifty Bible students and Christian workers in all parts of the country, who were kind enough to review the book before it went to press, in the light of their own experience and of the needs of their constituents, and whose suggestions played a very important part in the final revision, the author desires to express his sincere gratitude. The names of John G. Magee and Joseph W. Roe would have appeared on the title page as joint authors of the studies, had they permitted it. To the inspiration of their lives and to their many suggestions the idea and plan of the book owes much.

In conclusion, I would that these studies might be privileged to do a little something toward dissipating a prevalent idea that the doing of God's will is synonymous with a narrow, difficult and disagreeable life work. He who has willed to do God's will completely as it has been revealed in nature and humanity, and as it will daily be revealed in the path of duty, has for the first time fully found himself. The issues of such a life—and of such a life only—are freedom, joy and peace.

Taunton, Mass., July 24, 1909.

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Where the Scripture references are numerous the more important ones have been specially designated for the benefit of those whose time for each day's study is limited.

In the studies the following order has been taken as the probable one for the dates of composition of the books of the New Testament. Within the four main groups which may be regarded as practically certain the order of the several letters is of course in many instances wholly arbitrary. For the general purposes of a historical study of the development of the teaching regarding God's will, however, it is essential that some order be taken and until more evidence is at hand the decision between two alternatives must lie with the individual investigator.

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III. *Post Pauline Writings.* *[James], Heb., I Peter.

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V. II Peter, Jude.

*There seems to be no means of dating the book of James.

A. INTRODUCTORY

Study I. God has a Plan for Every Human Life.

Study II. Jesus and the Will of God.

Study III. The Apostles and the Will of God.

Study IV. The Principle of Surrender of Self Involved in Doing God's Will a Reasonable One and Fundamental in Other Departments of Life.

STUDY I

God has a Plan for Every Human Life

"I will gird thee, though thou hast not known me."—*Isaiah 45: 5.*

"For who withstandeth his will? Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why didst thou make me thus? Or hath not the potter a right over the clay, from the same lump to make one part a vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor?" —*Rom. 9: 19-21.*

"Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own?" —*Matt. 20: 15.*

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Study I. God has a Plan for Every Human Life

FIRST DAY

God has a Plan for the Development of the World which Extends to all Departments of Life and to all Spheres of Human Activity

[Isaiah 44 24-28; Jer. 18 5, 6.]

I Cor. 12 4-6, 12; II Cor. 10 13; Rom. 9 17 (cf. Ex. 9 16); Col. 1 16; Eph. 2 10.

Mark 13 20, 32; Matt. 6 25-34, 10 29, 30, 15 13, 25 34; Acts 1 7, 17 26.

Heb. 1 10-12, 3 4; Rev. 17 17.

"Man advances in the execution of a plan which he has not conceived and of which he is not even aware. He is the free and intelligent artificer of a work which is not his own. . . . . Conceive a great machine, the design of which is centred in a single mind, though its various parts are intrusted to different workmen, separated from, and strangers to one another. No one of them understands the work as a whole, nor the general result which he concurs in producing; but every one executes with intelligence and freedom, by rational and voluntary acts, the particular task assigned to him."

GUIZOT: *Lectures on the History of Civilization, XI.*

"We need to know not merely what the essential qualities of civilization and of our social nature really are; but we require to know the general course in which they are tending. The more closely we look at it, the more distinctly we see that progress moves in a clear and definite path; the development of man is not a casual or arbitrary motion; it moves in a regular and consistent plan. Each part is unfolded in due order—the whole expanding like a single plant."

FREDERIC HARRISON: *The Meaning of History, page 15.*

"It is my conviction . . . . that capabilities of a peculiar character exist in almost every one and that a man's value to society depends to a large extent upon his discovering and developing his special talent."

GULICK: *The Efficient Life, page 11.*

Study I. God has a Plan for Every Human Life

SECOND DAY

Yet God has Decreed that this Plan shall not Advance without the Voluntary and Freely Given Cooperation of Mankind—"We are God's Fellow-workers"

I Cor. 3 [6-9]; II Cor. 5 [20], 6 [1]; Rom. 8 [28] (marginal note); Phil. 2 [12, 13].

Mark 6 [5, 6], 16 [20]; Matt. 23 [37]; Luke 1 [76], 10 [2, 3], 11 [5-13], 18 [1-8].

Heb. 2 [6-8], 13 [21]; Rev. 3 [20]; John 5 [17, 36], 8 [16].

Just as it is easier for any parent or teacher to do an appointed task himself than to guide patiently the stumbling efforts of his charges, so we might have expected that God would have completed himself the development of the kingdom of God on earth. Only infinite love could have decreed that this work should wait for every one of its advances upon the voluntary coöperation of blind, stubborn, whimsical human wills. Yet this is the deeper meaning of the Fatherhood of God as revealed on Calvary. There are two parts to every advance in human civilization—God's part and man's part. God is ever ready with his plan—and the complete means for its realization—in establishing the happy home, the efficient school, the righteous town or city. Yet he never forces or compels this plan. Patiently and uncomplainingly he waits while the pupil in the school of life experiments with his own little stubborn, selfish schemes, comforting him without reproach in his failures, until finally love, as revealed in the teacher, awakens confidence and desire to be led in the child (Rom. 2 [4]).

Study I. God has a Plan for Every Human Life

THIRD DAY

God has a Particular Part for Every Man to Perform in this Plan

[Isaiah 49 [1]; Jer. 1 [5].]

Gal. 1 [15, 16]; I Cor. 1 [17], 7 [7, 17], 12 [4] f (esp. v. 11); Rom. 9 [11, 12]; Eph. 2 [10], 4 [7, 8]; Phil. 3 [12].

Mark 13 [34]; Matt. 11 [10], 19 [11], 20 [1-16, 23], 25 [15]; Luke 13 [32, 33].

John 15 [16], 17 [4], 18 [37].

"What now shall we say of man, appearing as it were in the center of this great circle of uses? They are all adjusted for him; has he, then, no ends appointed for himself? Noblest of all creatures and closest to God as he certainly is, are we to say that his Creator has no definite thoughts concerning him, no place prepared for him to fill, no use for him to serve which is the reason for his existence? . . . .

"God has a definite life-plan for every human person, girding him, visibly or invisibly, for some exact thing which it will be the true significance and glory of his life to have accomplished. . . . . And all men may have this: for the humblest and commonest have a place and work assigned them in the same manner and have it for their privilege to be always ennobled in the same lofty consciousness. . . . . They [the Scriptures] show us how frequently, in the conditions of obscurity and depression, preparations of counsel are going on by which the commonest offices are to become the necessary first chapter of a great and powerful history—David among the sheep; Elisha following after the plough; Nehemiah bearing the cup: Hannah, who can say nothing less common than that she is the wife of Elkanah and a woman of sorrowful spirit—who that looks on these humble people, at their humble post of service, and discovers at last how dear a purpose God was cherishing in them, can be justified in thinking that God has no particular plan for him, because he is not signalized by any kind of distinction. . . . . God is guiding every

man for a place and calling, in which, taking it from him, even though it be internally humble, he may be as consciously exalted as if he held the rule of a kingdom."

BUSHNELL: *The New Life, pages 10-13.*

Study I. God has a Plan for Every Human Life

FOURTH DAY

Man may Find out what his Particular Part is and it is the True Purpose of his Existence to Discover and Do it

[II Sam. 7 [8, 9]; Psalm 32 [8, 9]; Jer. 1 [4-10].]
Acts 26 [12-19].

"Every human soul has a complete and perfect plan cherished for it in the heart of God—a divine biography marked out, which it enters into life to live. This life, rightly unfolded, will be a complete and beautiful whole, an experience led on by God and unfolded by his secret nurture, as the trees and the flowers by the secret nurture of the world, a drama, cast in the mould of a perfect art with no part wanting; a divine study for the man himself and for others; a study that shall forever unfold, in wondrous beauty, the love and faithfulness of God; great in its conception, great in the Divine skill by which it is shaped; above all, great in the momentous and glorious issues it prepares."

BUSHNELL: *Ibid.*

"God's will concerning foreordination, election, the plan of salvation and the problems of eschatology may be stated in highly technical and abstract phraseology and is doubtless susceptible of many shades of interpretation. God's will however as it applies to home life, social intercourse, the training of children, the doing of honest work and the making of a fair bargain, the care of the poor, the reform of the vicious, the encouragement of the unfortunate, the casting of the ballot, the administration of office, participation in plans for village improvement, coöperation in methods of social reform, does indeed require painstaking thought and laborious study to discover it; but once clearly apprehended, it is not difficult to state it in clear and convincing terms. . . . . Theological education has been disproportionately abstract, linguistic and antiquarian. It has taught God's will for Israel, rather than for the American Republic."

WILLIAM D. HYDE: *Forum, June, 1892, page 524.*

Study I. God has a Plan for Every Human Life

FIFTH DAY

Yet God Forces no Man to Accept the Divine Plan for his Life. Man may Refuse or Neglect to Find it out, or Having Found it out he may Refuse to Perform it and Follow Plans of his own Making

Rom. 2 [4], 8 [20, 21]; Col. 4 [17].

Matt. 19 [16-22]; Luke 6 [35] (end); Acts 14 [15-17], 17 [24-27] (esp. v. 27).

John 3 [20], 5 [40], 10 [17, 18].

"God has a life plan for every human life. In the eternal counsels of his will, when he arranged the destiny of every star and every sand-grain and every grass blade and each of those tiny insects which live but for an hour, the Creator had a thought for you and me. Our life was to be the slow unfolding of this thought, as the cornstalk from the corn or the flower from the gradually opening bud. It was a thought of what we were to be, of what we might become, of what *he* would have us to do with our days and years or influence with our lives. But we all had the terrible power to evade this thought and shape our lives from another thought, from another will if we chose. The bud could only become a flower, and the star revolve in the orbit God had fixed. But it was man's prerogative to choose his path, his duty to choose it in God. But the divine right to choose at all has always seemed more to him than his duty to choose in God, so, for the most part, he has taken his life *from* God and cut out his career from himself."

DRUMMOND: *The Ideal Life, page 305.*

Man's opportunity to choose freely is the deeper meaning of the temptation of Jesus. Before Jesus enters upon his life work the Spirit (Mark 1 [12,13]) leads him to the wilderness and allows him to decide freely for or against God. God never forces himself upon us. He always respects man's personality.

Study I. God has a Plan for Every Human Life

SIXTH DAY

Yet God's Great Plan for the World will be Ultimately Perfected Despite the Delays and Disorder Introduced by Human Perversity

[Daniel 4 32.]
II Cor. 13 8; Rom. 3 3, 9 17, 18, 28, 11 11.
Mark 4 26-29, 30-32; Matt. 13 24-30, 31-33, 37-43, 15 13.
Acts 1 7, 5 38, 39; James 5 1-8.

"Most of them, even the idiots and criminals, do a little something towards progress. The world is so happily ordered that it is impossible for one man to do much harm or to avoid doing some good, and one of the greatest forces for good is the power of a bad example."

George H. Lorimer.

"And then when he cannot use us any more for our own good, he will use us for the good of others—an example of the misery . . . . to which any soul must come, when all the good ends and all the holy callings of God's friendly and fatherly purpose are exhausted. Or, it may be now that, remitting all other plans and purposes in our behalf, he will henceforth use us, wholly against our will, to be the demonstration of his justice and avenging power before the eyes of mankind."

Bushnell: *The New Life, page 15.*

"Suppose two men before a chessboard—the one a novice, the other an expert player of the game. The expert intends to beat. But he cannot foresee exactly what any one actual move of his adversary may be. He knows, however, all the *possible* moves of the latter; and he knows in advance how to meet each of them by a move of his own which leads in the direction of victory. And the victory infallibly arrives, after no matter how devious a course, in the one predestined checkmate to the novice's king. . . . . Let now the novice stand for us finite free agents, and the expert for the infinite mind in

which the universe lies. . . . . The Creator's plan of the universe would thus be left blank as to many of its actual details, but all possibilities would be marked down. . . . . But the rest of the plan including its final upshot would be rigorously determined once for all. . . . . Of one thing, however, he [the Creator] might be certain; and that is that his world was safe and that no matter how much it might zigzag, he could surely bring it home at last."

JAMES: *The Will to Believe, pages 181, 182.*

Study I. God has a Plan for Every Human Life

SEVENTH DAY—REVIEW

1. Is it right to say that the life of every man who ever lived in the world, sinner or saint, was lived as planned by God; or that God had a plan for every man which may or may not have been realized?

2. Have cripples and the insane a part in God's plan for the world?

3. Have criminals a part also? Have sin and temptation?

4. Why is the theory that God has a plan for the world so common in history and science today?

5. Why are men often unwilling to find out God's plan for their lives?

6. Has God a plan for the development of every town and city in the world? (Jer. 18 [5, 6]; Matt. 23 [37]) for every school and university? for every home? Have any of these ever been fully realized? What is the test?

7. Can God use his enemies for the accomplishment of his purposes? (Cf. Acts 4 [27, 28], 25 [9-12] + Rom. 1 [13].)

STUDY II

Jesus and the Will of God

"For I am come down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me." —*John 6:38.*

"My Father . . . . not as I will, but as thou wilt." —*Matt. 26:39.*

"My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to accomplish his work." —*John 4:34.*

"I do always the things that are pleasing to him." —*John 8: 29 (end).*

"Our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us out of this present evil world, according to the will of our God and Father." —*Gal. 1:3, 4.*

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Study II. Jesus and the Will of God

FIRST DAY

The Idea that the Doing of God's Will is the Supreme Purpose of Life was not Originated by Jesus but was Restated and Emphasized by Him

"Tho' truths in manhood darkly join
Deep-seated in our mystic frame,
We yield all blessing to the name
Of him that made them current coin."

TENNYSON: *In Memoriam.*

[Psalms 40 7, 8, 139 24, 143 10; Daniel 4 17. Read also Gen. 22 1-12.]
Matt. 13 35.
Heb. 10 7.

"Almost everything Christ said was old. Christ's teaching was almost all taken out of the Old Testament. Almost all of the Sermon on the Mount could be constructed from the Old Testament. Many of Christ's parables have their roots in suggestions in the Old Testament. Some of Christ's miracles are clearly only the working out of Old Testament teachings. The body and substance of Christ's doctrine was borrowed, with a new spirit and life, of course, from the Old Testament. . . . . He was constantly telling those who took him for a novel instructor, that everything was in their own records and temples if their eyes were only open to see it."

SPEER: *Remember Jesus Christ, page 197.*

"This was largely Christ's own method. He dealt with principles. His teaching was mainly excavation—the disinterring of hidden things, the bringing to light of the profound ethical principles hidden beneath Rabbinic subtleties and Pharisaic forms."

DRUMMOND: *The New Evangelism, pages 70, 71.*

"Innumerable men had passed by, across the universe, with a dumb, vague wonder, such as the very animals may

feel or with a painful, fruitlessly inquiring wonder such as men only feel:—till the great thinker came—the original man, the seer; whose shaped spoken thoughts awake the slumbering capability of all into thought. It is ever the way with the thinker, the Spiritual Hero. What he says all men were not far from saying, were longing to say."

CARLYLE: *Heroes and Hero Worship.*

"Although it was known in Old Testament times and expressed in Old Testament books, it was reserved for Jesus Christ to make the full discovery to the world and add to his teaching another of the profoundest truths which have come from heaven to earth—that the mysteries of the Father's will are hid in this word 'obey.' "

DRUMMOND: *The Ideal Life, page 311.*

Study II. Jesus and the Will of God

SECOND DAY

To Find God's Will for His Life and to Do it, was the Ruling Principle and the Energizing Purpose of Jesus' Life

Gal. 1 [4]; Rom. 15 [3]; Matt. 4 [10], 6 [10], 26 [38-42]; Heb. 10 [5-10]; John 4 [34], 5 [30], 6 [38], 9 [4].

This principle

Was the reason for the Incarnation. John 6 [38].

Settled the Temptation. Matt. 4 [10].

Is a central thought in the Lord's Prayer. Matt. 6 [10].

Was the energizing cause of Jesus' marvelous ministry of service. John 4 [34].

Inspired the sacrifice of the Crucifixion. Gal. 1 [4]; Matt. 26 [38-42].

"The Will of God was Jesus' North Star."

JOHN R. MOTT.

"What he [Jesus] desires first of all to communicate is not a system of doctrine or a rush of feeling but an ethical decision. Before his public ministry begins he withdraws from human companionship and faces the special temptations of conscious power, of self display and of worldly glory which threaten him. Once and for all time he fortifies his will against them, and from that time to the day when he gives back his life to God, saying, 'Not my will but thine be done,' the dominating factor, both in his experience and his teaching, is not intellectual achievement or emotional exaltation but ethical decision."

F. G. PEABODY: *Jesus Christ and the Christian Character, pages 100, 101.*

Study II. Jesus and the Will of God

THIRD DAY

He Faced the Alternatives to doing God's Will as Definite, Conscious, Spiritual Temptations, and Successfully Overcame Them

Matt. 4 [1-11]; Luke 4 [1-13].

The temptation in the Wilderness was the crisis when Jesus came face to face with the three alternative life purposes, which a man may choose other than that of a life of complete surrender to God's will. The four possible choices may all be found in the narrative given by Matthew and Luke:

1. The life of mere physical self-indulgence. Matt. 4 [3]; Luke 4 [3].

2. The life of mere wealth-amassing. Matt. 4 [8, 9]; Luke 4 [5-8].

3. The life of mere fame-seeking. Matt. 4 [5, 6]; Luke 4 [9-11].

4. The life wholly surrendered to God. Matt. 4 [10].

Study II. Jesus and the Will of God

FOURTH DAY

There were Certain Definite Ways in which He Learned the Will of God for His Life

Matt. 6 [28], 18 [12-14], 26 [39-44]; Heb. 10 [7]; John 5 [30], 6 [29], 7 [17], 8 [28].

A careful study of the way in which Jesus learned the definite will of God for each particular event in his life will be taken up later. It is sufficient at this time to note some of the more general and outwardly discernible ways by which he came in touch with God's leading:

1. Through *willingness* to obey any order which might come from God before he knew what it was. Robertson has said that obedience not mind is the organ of spiritual knowledge. "He that is willing shall know." John 7 [17].

2. From God's revelation of himself in such human types as the shepherd and the father. Matt. 18 [12-14]; John 6 [39].

3. From God's revelation of himself in nature. Matt. 6 [28].

4. From God's revelation of himself in Scripture and in history. Heb. 10 [7]; Luke 13 [1-5].

5. By the definite act of listening for God. "As I hear." "As the father taught me." John 5 [30], 8 [28].

6. By repeated prayer until sure conviction came. Mark 1 [35-40]; Matt. 26 [39-44].

Study II. Jesus and the Will of God

FIFTH DAY

There were Definite and Immediate Issues of this Obedience in Jesus' Earthly Life

Phil. 2 [5-8]; Matt. 26 [38-42].

1. Ceaseless activity to accomplish his work—"that I should lose nothing." John 6 [39], 4 [34, 35], *but*

A strong support to work with—"my meat." John 4 [34].

2. The cup of suffering. Matt. 26 [38]. "Obedient even unto death." Phil. 2 [5-8], *but*

A sweet fellowship therein which transcends all pain—"brother, sister, mother." Matt. 12 [50].

Study II. Jesus and the Will of God

SIXTH DAY

The Ultimate Results

Phil. 2 [8-11] (cf. I John 2 [17]). "He is exalted"—fullest self-realization.

Heb. 10 [2-10]. "We have been sanctified"—the joy of having helped others.

Study II. Jesus and the Will of God

SEVENTH DAY—REVIEW

1. How early was Jesus conscious that the doing of God's will should be the purpose of a man's life? (Cf. Luke 2^{49}; John 8^{29}.)

2. Today we have the example and teaching of Jesus as revealed in the New Testament to show us what the will of God is. From what sources did Jesus learn?

3. Which one of the Hebrew patriarchs first grasped this idea? Trace its growth in the later books of the Old Testament. (See *Davidson,* The Called of God.)

4. Has every man, even without intellectual effort, some faint leading of what God's will for his life is? Is the distinction between right and wrong inborn or acquired? What are some indications of such leading common to both Christian and non-Christian people?

5. What is the teaching of Socrates on the subject of obedience to God's will in the *Apology, Crito* and *Phaedo?*

6. May a man unconsciously do the will of God and yet get the same results as if he had chosen to do it?

7. Did Jesus ever rebel against the will of God in the earlier years of his life?

STUDY III

The Apostles and the Will of God

"Ye are witnesses of these things."

Jesus to the Twelve—*Luke 24:48.*

"Christ . . . . in whom also we were made a heritage, having been foreordained according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his will." —*Eph. 1:10,11.*

"And be not fashioned according to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that *ye may prove* what is the good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God."

Paul to the Roman Christians—*Rom. 12:2.*

Study III. The Apostles and the Will of God

FIRST DAY

To the Apostles and Immediate Followers of Jesus Was Intrusted the Interpretation and Practical Application of His Teaching Regarding the Will of God

Matt. 13 [51, 52]; Luke 24 [48]; Acts 10 [40-43].

To his apostles and immediate followers Jesus left the difficult and responsible task of interpreting and practically applying to the age in which they lived, the great eternal principle that obedience to God's will is the one purpose of life; a principle which, as we have already seen, although stated in the Old Testament, Jesus had unearthed and for the first time fully made clear (John 8 [12]). The revelation and dissemination of this new truth carried with it grave dangers (John 15 [22, 24]; 9 [41]), and the apostles undoubtedly realized the importance of their task. Many of the letters are concerned with correcting of false teaching regarding God's will. So thorough was their preaching of it that there are few chapters in the entire New Testament which are not dominated by the general idea, and few books or letters which do not deal with it directly. The manifold growth of the idea under the different conditions which presented themselves in widely diverse communities, and the interpretation of each new situation by the different Christian leaders forms a most interesting study but one too long to be attempted here. We must confine ourselves to the working out of the principle in the lives of the leaders of the early church.

Study III. The Apostles and the Will of God

SECOND DAY

The Early Church and the Will of God

Acts 1 [6-11], 2 [1-4, 41], 4 [32-35].

In *Acts* we have the story of the obedience of the early church to God's call and leading, with the record of its triumphant results. The early Christian leaders had no doubt as to their own mission (Acts 10 [40-43]). Study the power of the early church in winning converts in spite of great persecution (8 [1, 4], 5 [41], 19 [20]); also the difficulty which was sometimes experienced in making clear to men what surrender to God's will meant (19 [1-6]). Note also that the form in which God's will was revealed to men was through compelling convictions (cf. 19 [21]). "I must." "We must."

Ananias (9 [10-18]), Philip (8 [26]), Agabus (11 [28], 21 [11]), early disciples (13 [2], 15 [28], 21 [4]), Cornelius (10 [3, 22, 30, 31]), Peter (10 [10], 11 [12], 12 [7]), Paul (9 [4-7], 16 [6, 9, 10], 18 [9, 10], 19 [21], 22 [7, 10, 17, 18, 21], 23 [11], 26 [14], 27 [23]).

Study III. The Apostles and the Will of God

THIRD DAY

Peter and the Will of God

John 21 [15-22].

Perhaps the most complete change that takes place within the circle of Jesus' followers after the resurrection is in Peter. Review briefly the main facts in his career from his call to Jesus' crucifixion (John 1 [40] f; Matt. 14 [29-31], 17 [1] f; 26 [37] f; Mark 14 [68]). What indications of self-will in his life? What motives generally influenced his actions in this period? Study the passage given for today's study as the crisis in his spiritual career. What does verse 22 indicate regarding God's will for the individual? After the ascension what change in his attitude? (Acts 5 [29-32].) When had Jesus foreseen and predicted this change? (Luke 22 [31, 32].)

Study III. The Apostles and the Will of God

FOURTH DAY

Philip and the Will of God

Acts 8 [26-40].

Another striking witness to the power of God in transforming a man's life when that man becomes fully obedient to God's will is the case of Philip. "Philip . . . . we may call . . . . with all respect for his goodness and his eminent usefulness, the stupid apostle. He is able to see only what lies generally on the surface of things, but nothing beyond." (*Thompson,* "The Training of the Twelve." NORTHFIELD ECHOES: *Vol. III, No. 2, page 125.*) Study the instances of his dullness before he had grasped the idea of complete surrender of self (John 6 [5], 12 [20-22], 14 [8, 9]). Then examine carefully the record of his personal interview with the Ethiopian eunuch. What evidences of keen spiritual apprehension and power of diagnosis? To what is this change to be ascribed?

Study III. The Apostles and the Will of God

FIFTH DAY

Paul and the Will of God

Acts 9 [1-22].

What do we know about Paul's career before the spiritual crisis on the Damascus road? (Acts 8 [1-3].) What was his attitude toward the Christians? Study carefully the passage for today's study. How account for the completeness of his surrender of self to Jesus? Through what means was God's will for the immediate future revealed to him? Where did he work out the more complete details? (Gal. 1 [16, 17].) What were some of the issues of this crisis in Paul's later life?

"There is the outline of a wonderful development here, from the young Jew who superintended Stephen's martyrdom to the prophet of the Gentiles, tender, strong, leaning like a little child on the mercy and help of Christ, meeting his own martyrdom with no anger at human sin, no shrieks of fanatic disappointment, but the secret confidence that even in death he was being led in triumph in Christ."

SPEER: *The Man Paul, page 38.*

Study III. The Apostles and the Will of God

SIXTH DAY

Paul and the Will of God (concluded)

I Thess. 4 [2-12].

In his letters Paul gives many practical expositions and applications to different situations of the principle of surrender of self to God, which had transformed his life. In *I Thessalonians*, the earliest of the epistles, he defines the will of God (4 [2-12]). In *Galatians* he sounds a protest against the attempt to substitute moral living for this life of absolute surrender of self. In *I Corinthians* he demonstrates that God's will can be done in all professions (7 [20-24], 10 [31]), and by all kinds of men (1 [26-31], 7 [7]). *Romans* contains his protest against the attempt to substitute membership in an established religious body for the life of absolute self-surrender (6 [13], 8 [14,15], 12 [1]). In *Colossians* he demonstrates the relation of obedience to wisdom (1 [9, 10], 2 [3]). In *Ephesians* he restates again in practical terms what God's will is (4 [25]—5 [17]). In *Philippians* he asserts that God can use everything which befalls a man who is living the surrendered life—suffering, opposition, death—so that he will rejoice and glory in his sufferings and feel that, for Jesus' sake, even to die is gain (1 [21], 2 [5-11]). He also demonstrates in this letter that a sure issue of obedience is a mighty power to achieve results (4 [13]).

Study III. The Apostles and the Will of God

SEVENTH DAY—REVIEW

1. How did John's acceptance of the principle of surrender of self to God differ from that of Peter or Paul? (John 21 [20-22].)

2. Did Jesus ever force this principle upon others? (Matt. 23 [37].)

3. How many of the Apostles had made the act of surrender at the time of the crucifixion?

4. Trace the working of this principle in the lives of Thomas and Judas. (Cf. John 20 [24-29].)

STUDY IV

The Principle of Surrender of Self Involved in Doing God's Will a Reasonable One and Fundamental in Other Departments of Life

"Except a grain of wheat fall into the earth and die, it abideth by itself alone: but if it die, it beareth much fruit." —*John 12:24.*

"Know ye not, that to whom ye present yourselves as servants unto obedience, his servants ye are whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness." —*Rom. 6:16.*

"The nations owe their existence to the willingness of the best and the most unselfish, the strongest and the purest, to offer themselves for sacrifice. Whatever humanity possesses of the highest good has been achieved by such men."

PAULSEN: *System of Ethics, page 159.*

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Study IV. The Principle of Surrender of Self Involved in Doing God's Will a Reasonable One

FIRST DAY

Self-development the Primary Law of Life

Matt. 25 [14-30]; Luke 2 [52].
Heb. 11 [6, 26].

James, William: Principles of Psychology (1890), I., page 307 ff.

Γνῶθι σεαυτόν—"Know thyself" (Inscription at Delphi).

"A knowledge of his own heart . . . . that is the best of all keys to a knowledge of the hearts of others."

PLUMMER: *Expositor's Bible, James, page 359.*

"Self-realization is the primary law of life. It is not selfish to cultivate one's faculties or to utilize one's opportunities. Faculties and opportunities are possessed only as they are developed and used, and without cultivation shrivel and disappear. Jesus himself teaches this truth with unusual elaboration in the parable of the talents. The gifts of life, according to this impressive picture, increase in the using and shrink through disuse. To cultivate one's powers is to multiply them, and from him who fails to increase his stock is taken away that which seemed his own."

PEABODY: *Jesus Christ and the Christian Character, pages 199, 200.*

Study IV. The Principle of Surrender of Self Involved in Doing God's Will a Reasonable One

SECOND DAY

Yet Self-sacrifice Alone Satisfies the Moral Demands of Life

I Cor. 8 [12, 13], 9 [22]; II Cor. 11 [23-29]; Phil. 3 [7-11].
Mark 8 [34]; Matt. 10 [38], 16 [24]; Luke 9 [23], 14 [27].
John 12 [25].

"Instead of the sagacious maxims of self-interest there is heard the call to the heroic, the self-forgetting, the larger good. . . . . Self-abnegation, self-effacement, even the scorn of self, becomes the mark of positive morality; and the self-considering, computing, prudential spirit is a sign that positive morality has not yet begun."

PEABODY: *Jesus Christ and the Christian Character, pages 201, 202.*

"Self-sacrifice is an everyday affair. By it we live. It is the very air of our moral lungs. Without it society could not go on for one hour. . . . . I mean by self-sacrifice any diminution of my own possessions, pleasures or powers in order to increase those of others . . . . the greatest conceivable sacrifice is when I give myself; when, that is, I in some way allow my own powers to be narrowed in order that those of some one else may be enlarged. . . . . Yet this is what is going on all over the country where devoted mother, gallant son, loyal husband are limiting their own range of existence for the sake of broadening that of certain whom they hold dear."

PALMER: *The Nature of Goodness, pages 164-166.*

Study IV. The Principle of Surrender of Self Involved in Doing God's Will a Reasonable One

THIRD DAY

The Solution of the Dilemma; Full Self-realization Possible Only Through Self-surrender

Mark 8 [35]; Matt. 6 [33], 10 [39], 16 [25]; Luke 9 [24].

"What, then, is my duty, cries out, in grave perplexity, this life which finds itself rent by opposing motives—to develop myself or to deny myself; to hear the command of Jesus bidding me invest my talents prudently, or to hear his other command bidding me sell all I have, take up my cross and follow? . . . . Jesus meets the issue with his paradox of sacrifice. There is, he teaches, no such schism in life between gain and loss, self-cultivation and self-abnegation, the finding of life and the losing of it. The field of duty-doing is not a battlefield where duties to one's self contend against duties to others; it is a field where human life like other living things is growing; and growth by its very nature, means transmission, expansion, the giving of the root to the stalk, and of the stalk to the flower—a loss which is gain and a death which is life. In short, when Jesus announces the paradox that to save life is to lose it, and that to lose it is to save it, he is transferring to conduct the general law which the process of Nature had disclosed to his observant eye."

PEABODY: *Jesus Christ and the Christian Character, pages 202, 203.*

Study IV. The Principle of Surrender of Self Involved in Doing God's Will a Reasonable One

FOURTH DAY

The Witness of Science and of Nature

I Cor. 15 [36]; John 12 [24].

"Science seems to me to teach in the highest and strongest manner the great truth which is embodied in the Christian conception of entire surrender to the will of God. Sit down before fact as a little child, be prepared to give up every pre-conceived notion, follow humbly wherever and to whatever abysses nature leads, or you shall learn nothing. I have only begun to learn content and peace of mind since I have resolved at all risks to do this."

HUXLEY: *Life and Letters of Huxley (1900), Vol. I, page 235.*

"The same paradox is observed in biological organisms, in physiological tissues, in intellectual achievements, even in economic progress. Physical health, which seems to depend on that which the body receives, depends in fact quite as much on what is exhaled and excreted."

PEABODY: *Jesus Christ and the Christian Character, page 203 ff.*

"The life alike of the corn and of the conscience, was, as Jesus saw it, a process of development through service, of self-realization through self-sacrifice. The life that withheld itself was checked and dwarfed; the life that yielded itself was enriched and confirmed. Assimilation and elimination, receiving to give, dying to live—such was the rhythm of nature which Jesus discovered alike in the fields of Galilee and in the life of men."

Ibid., page 203.

"*Question.* What is the duty of man? *Answer.* To assist his fellows, to develop his own higher self, to strive

towards good in every way open to his powers and generally to seek to know the laws of nature and to obey the will of God in whose service alone can be found that harmonious exercise of the faculties which is synonymous with perfect freedom."

SIR OLIVER LODGE: *The Substance of Faith, page 138.*

In bridgebuilding, even a weak girder or beam, if placed so as to bear its load in conformity with the laws of nature, will support an immense weight. The strongest girder, on the other hand, if set contrary to these laws, will soon give way beneath the pressure.

Study IV. The Principle of Surrender of Self Involved in Doing God's Will a Reasonable One

FIFTH DAY

The Witness of History and of Human Experience

[Eccl. 11 [1].]

II Cor. 9 [6]; Mark 10 [43, 44]; Rev. 7 [13-17], 14 [13].

"The nations owe their existence to the willingness of the best and the most unselfish, the strongest and the purest, to offer themselves for sacrifice. Whatever humanity possesses of the highest good has been achieved by such men."

PAULSEN: *System of Ethics, page 159.*

"Life stripped to its essentials offers but two alternatives to the man of action. He may work for himself alone, building his little selfish walls across the advancing path of civilization and making them stumbling-blocks in the way of progress. Then, however successful he may be, ultimately the stern mills of the gods will grind him and his structures to dust, and he and his work will vanish from the earth. Or having the eyes that see, he may place his effort parallel with the eternal lines of force that mark the purposes of God and then what he builds will endure."

HERBERT KNOX SMITH: *To Yale Alumni of Hartford, Feb. 8, 1907.*

"He who would understand a painting must give himself to it." RUSKIN.

"Intellectual growth seems a matter of accumulated learning; but an undigested mass of erudition leaves one a bookworm rather than a scholar, and productive expression alone clarifies and sifts the scholar's mind. The movement of trade is on its surface a mere scramble of self-seeking; but in its total action economic life is a vast tidal process of production and distribution, of multiplying by investing, of increase through use. To hoard one's possessions is to lose their increment."

PEABODY: *Jesus Christ and the Christian Character, page 204.*

Study IV. The Principle of Surrender of Self Involved in Doing God's Will a Reasonable One

SIXTH DAY

The Witness of the Life of Jesus

Phil. 2 [5-11]; Mark 10 [45].

"If we estimate the greatness of a man by the influence which he has exerted on mankind, there can be no question, even from the secular point of view, that Christ is much the greatest man who has ever lived."

ROMANES: *Thoughts on Religion, page 169.*

"Many followers of Jesus and many critics of his teaching have conceived that the character derived from him is a stunted and truncated type which flings itself away in self-abandoning and self-scorning altruism. The fact is, on the contrary, that the paradox of sacrifice indicates the only way of deliverance from the stunted and truncated life. Nothing shuts in a life and shuts out satisfaction and joy like the self-considering temper and the self-centered aim. Such a life, though it may seem to itself self-developing, is in fact self-deceived. Instead of growing richer in its resources, it finds itself growing poorer. The more it cultivates itself, the more sterile it grows; the more it accumulates, the less it has; the more it saves, the more it is lost. The paradox of Jesus is the picture of a character which is enriched by spending, developed by serving, happier itself because it makes a happier world, finding itself in losing itself, discovering the unity of the moral world, where sacrifice is growth and service is freedom."

PEABODY: *Jesus Christ and the Christian Character, page 206.*

Study IV. The Principle of Surrender of Self Involved in Doing God's Will a Reasonable One

SEVENTH DAY—REVIEW

1. When duties to self and duties to others appear to be in conflict which shall we fulfil?

2. Is a man's ability to serve others proportional to his physical, mental and spiritual talents?

3. Was Jesus' life a narrow one?

4. Can a man grow narrow by overmuch service of others?

5. When is a man justified in turning from service to develop or conserve his own powers?

B. THE DECISION TO DO GOD'S WILL

Study V. The Relation of the Act of Surrender of Self to Other Religious Rites and Spiritual Experiences.

Study VI. The Alternatives to Doing God's Will as a Life Purpose.

Study VII. The Spiritual Crisis Involved in Facing the Issue of Surrender of Self. Its Symptoms and its Course.

Study VIII. To Find Out and to Do God's Will for One's Life is an Achievement Possible for Any Man.

Study IX. God's Will may be Done in Any Honorable Trade or Profession Either at Home or Abroad.

Study X. The Necessity for Absolute Surrender of Self.

STUDY V

The Relation of the Act of Surrender of Self to Other Religious Rites and Spiritual Experiences

"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." —*Matt. 7:21.*

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Study V. The Relation of the Act of Surrender of Self to Other Religious Rites and Spiritual Experiences

FIRST DAY

Every Man Must, Sooner or Later, Face the Issue of his Personal Relation to God, and When Once the Question is Raised, Perfect Peace of Mind and Soul can be Thereafter Secured, only by the Deliberate Decision to do God's Will Unconditionally, Whenever it shall be Clearly Revealed

[Ps. 139 1-24.]

Investigation shows that there are three ideas which no human being, savage or civilized, is without; the distinction between right and wrong, the desire for eternal life and the conception of a supreme being or God. The problem of man's relation to God is, therefore, a universal and eternal one, and for the purpose of settling this question our life on this earth seems to have been given us (Acts 17 26, 27). In the Old Testament we find many attempts of man to justify himself before God through outward form of sacrifice or ritual, and through the meditation of a priest (Ps. 51). But even the prophets of those days saw clearly that such impersonal and external methods would not suffice to bring peace (Hosea 6 6; Isaiah 58 3-11), inasmuch as religion is a vital personal matter, "the life of God in the soul of man." What then is this vital, personal act of self-surrender whereby the life of God enters the soul of man (Gal. 2 20; II Cor. 6 16; John 3 3, 14 23), and which, being the final settlement of the greatest life problem, brings perfect peace?

Study V. The Relation of the Act of Surrender of Self to Other Religious Rites and Spiritual Experiences

SECOND DAY

Is this Act Necessarily the Same Thing as the Decision to Live a Moral Life?

I Cor. 4 [4]; Rom. 3 [21, 22, 31], 10 [3]; Eph. 2 [8].
Matt. 19 [16-22]; Acts 11 [16], 19 [1-7].

There are two great facts in the world—sin and righteousness. Conversion is popularly regarded as the breaking away from sin—generally from some one particular sin like intemperance, or impurity, or dishonesty. With most of us life is a series of such breaks.

In such a break with wrong-living a man often gives up one particular sin to God but he still retains his own control over the rest of his life. It is true that some men—especially those in middle life—who are converted from some desperate sin which has made them outcasts, surrender themselves entirely to God when they are converted and this explains such lives of power as Jerry McAuley and S. H. Hadley. But it is perfectly possible for a man to have broken with one of his besetting sins and yet live an unsurrendered life.

The book of Galatians is a protest against the attempt to substitute moral living for the self-surrendered life. Paul realizes the value of morality. The struggle for it is the first step toward self-surrender (Gal. 3 [24]), but as the writer of Hebrews urges we are to pass on further (Heb. 5 [11-14], 6 [1, 2]).

Study V. The Relation of the Act of Surrender of Self to Other Religious Rites and Spiritual Experiences

THIRD DAY

Is it Always the Same Thing as Such Rites of Confession as Baptism, or Uniting with the Church, or Partaking of the Communion?

I Cor. 13 [1]; Rom. 8 [9] (end), 9 [6]; II Tim. 3 [5].

Mark 7 [6-8], 12 [32, 33]; Matt. 3 [9], 21 [28-31]; Luke 3 [8], 6 [46], 13 [25-27], 18 [9-14].

It is not alone necessary to break with sin—man must lay hold on righteousness. Through the outward rites of confession, such as baptism, uniting with the church, and partaking of the Lord's Supper, man is brought into the fellowship of Christians and into the presence of God (Luke 13 [26]). But all such rites may be the act of our going into God's presence, not of our letting him come into ours. It is one thing to "eat and drink in his presence" where we still have the say as to the running of things, and another and very different thing to "open the door and let him come in" to direct the feast (Rev. 3 [20]). It is true that many men do make the entire surrender when they join the church (Gal. 3: [27]); there are others who yield to God when very young, through the mediation of a mother's Christian nurture; others still at the first communion or even in baptism. This explains such lives of power as Drummond and Brooks which seem to have laid hold on God with no cataclysmic break from sin. But it is perfectly possible for a man to embrace the forms of righteousness and yet never have given God complete control of his life. Furthermore it is conceivable that a man, as for instance in pioneer country, without opportunity for public confession such as uniting with the church, might be doing God's will perfectly outside the church. A man who joins a rival church to spite his opponent or for self-interest is certainly not doing God's will. Hence, here again, the attempt to make the act of self-surrender synonymous with public confession is not inclusive enough.

Study V. The Relation of the Act of Surrender of Self to Other Religious Rites and Spiritual Experiences

FOURTH DAY

Is it Necessarily the Same Thing as the Decision to Live a Life of Philanthropy, Giving Money and Time for the Uplifting of Mankind?

I Cor. 13 [3] (first half); Matt. 7 [22, 23]; Luke 10 [38-42]. Acts 8 [20, 21]; Heb. 10 [1].

The great commandment enjoins not only love to God but also love to man (Mark 12 [28-31]). Through the service of humanity, by gifts of money and by the expenditure of talents and time for philanthropic ends, we fulfil at least one half of the great law of love. In the service of man we may find God. True we *may*, but *do* we always? "If I bestow all my goods to feed the poor and have not love, it profiteth me nothing."

What is this love? It is no human trait, but the actual Spirit of God moving in the heart of man, inspiring him to help others and answering unerringly that most difficult of all questions—when and how to help. There is no sadder or more disquieting sight than an unadapted or misdirected gift or deed of philanthropy—huge palatial workingmen's pleasure houses, erected by well-meaning employers, which stand idle because the workingmen will not frequent them—bequests that are a burden to a community rather than a foundation of helpfulness (cf. *Peabody*, Jesus Christ and the Social Question, page 339).

It is true that many men do make their entire surrender to God through some great gift or act of service (cf. the possibility which lay before the rich young ruler. Matt. 19 [16-22]), but it is perfectly possible for a man to give away all his property and devote all his time to philanthropic work and yet never have opened his heart to let the inspiring and guiding force—Love, God—come in. Furthermore, if the doing of God's will embraces merely the making of great gifts, a

man without money or intellectual talents or physical health could not do God's will. Hence, again, the attempt to make the act of self-surrender synonymous with philanthropy is not inclusive enough.

Study V. The Relation of the Act of Surrender of Self to Other Religious Rites and Spiritual Experiences

FIFTH DAY

Is it Always the same Thing as "Volunteering"—the Consecration of One's Life to Foreign Missionary Service?

I Cor. 13 [3] (second half).

Jesus' last command was that the gospel should be preached to every nation. There is no more apparent form of consecration or self-sacrifice than Foreign Missionary service. Yet some lives of missionaries might be cited which have been utter failures, both in achievement and in their moral results. It is true that it is possible for any man to make the complete surrender to God when he makes the decision to "go to the foreign field if God permits;" he may do so when he decides to live his life in a particular place in response to a particular need; but it should always be distinctly pointed out that this latter decision, alone, in itself is not a complete surrender of a man's whole self to God—his pride, his besetting sin, his laziness, his unfilial attitude toward objecting parents. Furthermore, the act of complete self-surrender must obviously also include the willingness *not* to be a missionary but a ditch-digger if God so wills, for God's will is to be done in business, teaching, law and medicine at home just as much as abroad. For one, therefore, to regard the act of self-surrender as synonymous with "volunteering" is again not inclusive enough in that it confuses an act which should be the mainspring of *every* occupation and profession at home or abroad with the act which decides the geographical location of one's profession.

Study V. The Relation of the Act of Surrender of Self to Other Religious Rites and Spiritual Experiences

SIXTH DAY

The Act of Self-surrender

II Cor. 8 [5]; Matt. 11 [28, 29]; Heb. 11 [1, 6]; Rev. 3 [20]; John 1 [12], 5 [40].

The act of self-surrender is a definite, conscious, personal compact between a man and God alone, entirely independent of all outward religious rites, forms or services, and for which no outward form, rite or sacrifice can be substituted. Man voluntarily gives God absolute possession of his life and God comes in. This act is often coincident with such outward manifestations of spiritual experiences as conversion, baptism, uniting with the church or volunteering, but it need not be; and it is perfectly possible for a man to enter into any or all of the above states without surrender to the will of God at all. Right living, public confession and ceaseless service are the *subsequent issues* of a decision to do God's will *not the substitutes for it,* and without the previous energizing and life-giving impetus within of a decision to do God's will they are merely an artificial and laborious human manufacture and not a healthy, spontaneous, and continuous natural growth.

"One man will tell you that the end of life is to be true; another will tell you that it is to deny self; another will say it is to keep the Ten Commandments; a fourth will point you to the Beatitudes. One will tell you it is to *do* good, another that it is to *get* good, another that it is to *be* good. But the end of life is none of these things. It is more than all and it includes them all. The end of life is not to deny self, nor to be true, nor to keep the Ten Commandments—[it is] simply to do God's will. It is not to get good, nor be good, nor even to do good—[it is] just what God wills, whether that be working or waiting, or winning or losing, or suffer-

ing or recovering, or living or dying. . . . . It is not to be happy or to be successful or famous, or to do the best we can and get on honestly in the world. It is something far higher than this, to do God's will. . . . . We do not mean, Are we doing God's work?—preaching or teaching or collecting money—but God's *will*. A man may think he is doing God's work when he is not even doing God's will. And a man may be doing God's work and God's will quite as much by hewing stones or sweeping streets as by preaching or praying. So the question means just this—Are we working out our common everyday life on the great lines of God's will? This is different from the world's model life—'I come to push my way'—this is the world's idea of it. 'Not my way, not my will but thine be done'—this is the Christian's. . . . . 'Thy will be *done*'—now mark the emphasis on *done*. He prays that God's will may be done. It is not that God's will may be borne, endured, put up with. There is activity in his prayer. It is not mere resignation. . . . . The ideal man . . . . does not want a bed of roses or his pathway strewn with flowers. He wants to do God's will. He does not want health or wealth, nor does he covet sickness or poverty—just what God sends. He does not want success—even success in winning souls—or want of success. What God wills for him, that is all. He does not want to prosper in business or to keep barely struggling on. God knows what is best. He does not want his friends to live, himself to live or die. God's will be done! The currents of his life flow far deeper than the circumstance of things. There is a deeper principle in it than to live to gratify himself. And so he simply asks that in the ordinary round of his daily life there may be no desire of his heart more deep, more vivid, more absorbingly present than this, 'Thy will be done.'"

DRUMMOND: *The Ideal Life, pages 229-238 (passim).*

Study V. The Relation of the Act of Surrender of Self to Other Religious Rites and Spiritual Experiences

SEVENTH DAY—REVIEW

1. Is the act of self-surrender a necessary, or merely a higher spiritual experience?

2. Are only those who do God's will saved? (Matt. 7 [21].)

3. Need a person lead a moral life to do God's will?

4. Need a person join the church to do God's will?

5. Need a person be baptized to do God's will?

6. Need a person partake of communion to do God's will?

7. Which of these rites did Jesus engage in?

8. In how far were the Anabaptists of Luther's day right in their doctrine? What was their error?

9. Has the act of making a public confession in a revival meeting a relation to God's will? Is public confession necessary? Should it come before or after surrender to God's will in one's own closet?

10. Study the following deed of consecration in the light of the week's study:

"This sixteenth day of November, 1895, I, Hugh McA. Beaver, do of my own free will, give myself, all that I am and have, entirely, unreservedly, and unqualifiedly to him, whom having not seen I love, on whom, though now I see him not, I believe. Bought with a price, I give myself to him who at the cost of his own blood, purchased me. Now committing myself to him who is able to guard me from stumbling. . . . . I trust myself to him, for all things to be used as he shall see fit where he shall see fit. Sealed by the Holy Spirit, filled with the peace of God that passeth understanding, to him be all glory, world without end. Amen."

SPEER: *A Memorial of a True Life, page 136.*

STUDY VI

The Alternatives to Doing God's Will as a Life Purpose

"But he said unto him, A certain man made a great supper; and he bade many: and he sent forth his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden, Come; for all things are now ready. And they all with one consent began to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have bought a field and I must needs go out and see it: I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them: I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have married a wife and therefore I cannot come." —*Luke 14: 16-20.*

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Study VI. The Alternatives to Doing God's Will as a Life Purpose

FIRST DAY

God or Mammon. Enlistment with One or the Other Inevitable. There is no Middle Course. Refusal to Enlist with God is Enlistment with Mammon

Gal. 1 [10]; Rom. 6 [15-23], 8 [14, 15]; Col. 3 [22]; II Tim. 3 [4].
Matt. 6 [22-24]; Luke 11 [23]; Rev. 3 [15, 16]; II Peter 2 [19].

Many men object to the word "surrender" in connection with the decision to do God's will on the ground that it characterizes us as rebels against God, and that such an act must take away all personal liberty. That this is in fact not so will be demonstrated later. (Study VII—Sixth Day.) But even if it were could we object? Are we in a position to demand rights of God or do we not rather, from the very start, owe him obligations? (Rom. 9 [19-21]; Luke 17 [7-10]; cf. also Isaiah 45 [9], 64 [8].)

God's wonderful love and regard for man's personality is nowhere more apparent than in the fact that, in spite of our obvious obligations to him, he has granted to every one of us absolute liberty to accept or reject his service. In some cases perhaps the term "enlistment" is better than "surrender." Paul uses the phrase "adoption as sons" (Gal. 4 [5]). A man like Jesus, who had not previously been in the service of Mammon, "surrenders" himself when he enters God's service in the same sense in which a soldier voluntarily "surrenders" or "consecrates" his all to the nation when he enlists; or as husband and wife "surrender" or "devote" or "present" themselves to each other in the marriage vow (Rom. 6 [13]).

If however a man has been in the enemy's service before he enters the service of God—this was the case with Paul (Gal. 1 [13]; Acts 22 [6-10]) and is probably the case with most of us—he needs in a more truly literal sense to surrender himself and take an oath of allegiance to the new ruler before

he can be counted as a loyal subject in the free service of God (Rom. 5^{10}, 6^{16-23}).

It is obvious that man must be in the service of either God or Mammon. Does the service of Mammon—by which Jesus must mean the alternatives to doing God's will as a life purpose—offer more freedom and liberty than that of God? (Rom. 6^{16}.)

Study VI. The Alternatives to Doing God's Will as a Life Purpose

SECOND DAY

The Service of Mammon—Three Possible Aspects

Matt. 4 [1-11]; Luke 14 [16-20]; I John 2 [16].

"Ye cannot serve God and Mammon." By "Mammon" Jesus must mean whatever other possible alternatives offer themselves as life purposes outside of complete surrender to the will of God. The service of Mammon has at least three different aspects. Jesus faced and rejected all three in the temptation and afterwards discussed the same three in the parable of the rejected invitations.* If a man refuses to live the life surrendered to the will of God he has three other possible alternatives, to the bondage (Rom. 6 [16]; II Tim. 2 [26]; John 8 [34]; II Peter 2 [19]) of one or the other of which he may devote his life—(1) the life surrendered to self-indulgence; (2) the life surrendered to wealth-getting; (3) the life surrendered to fame-seeking.†

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*In this parable the owner of the oxen is seeking fame rather than wealth. It is the number—five yoke—on which he lays emphasis.

†It is an interesting confirmation of the depth and soundness of Jesus' observations regarding human nature that these alternatives of his parable were the identical three presented to Paris by the Goddesses Aphrodite, Athena and Hera in the old Greek myth connected with the Trojan war. Aphrodite offered self-indulgence, Athena fame in war, Hera the wealth of empire.

Study VI. The Alternatives to Doing God's Will as a Life Purpose

THIRD DAY

The Life Surrendered to Self-indulgence

Rom. 8 [6-8]; Matt. 4 [2, 3, 4]; Luke 14 [20].
Read also carefully Matt. 24 [45-51]; Luke 17 [26-30], 21 [34].

Many men who possess the capacity to attain neither fame nor wealth and others who, though possessing the capacity, are not attracted by these things, surrender their lives to some form of self-indulgence. Let us begin with one of the commonest which although not generally regarded as such Jesus recognized (Matt. 4 [4]) and often warned men against. "Every one can recall individuals who are so tied to their three good meals a day that they make themselves and everyone else miserable the moment their habits are broken into by circumstances" (*Griggs*, Moral Education, page 150). Of such Paul speaks when he mentions those "whose God is their belly" (Rom. 16 [18]; Phil. 3 [19]). A man may be a slave to self-indulgence in any one of many other forms—sleep, drinking, smoking, gambling, the theatre, sport, dress, or, as was the case in the parable of the rejected invitations, in subtler forms which concern domestic life.

Mark Antony might have been the ruler of the world had he not surrendered himself to self-indulgence. Surely there is no more pitiable sight than a man created by God to be a master who is a slave of habit. How free Jesus was from slavery to any form of appetite or artificial stimulant (Mark 15 [23]; John 4 [31-34]) and yet how calm and effective was his life without it! (Mark 1 [32-35], 4 [35-41].) Paul learned from Jesus the true place of self-indulgence (I Cor. 6 [12], 8 [8], 9 [27]; Rom. 13 [11-14], 14 [17]; Col. 2 [20-23]).

Study VI. The Alternatives to Doing God's Will as a Life Purpose

FOURTH DAY

The Life Surrendered to Wealth-getting

Matt. 4 [8-10]; Luke 14 [18].

Read also carefully I Tim. 6 [7-10, 17]; Mark 10 [17-31]; Matt. 6 [19-21], 19 [16-22]; Luke 12 [13-21]; James 5 [1-6].

Though free from the slavery of self-indulgence a man is often tempted to yield his life to selfish acquisition. He buys a field and he must needs go and see it, no matter what are the calls of home or of citizenship or of church. He makes the exchange, which Jesus refused, of a surrender of principle for all the kingdoms of the world. The slavery of such a life, whether it concerns itself with the amassing of money and of property, or of other forms of wealth, such as learning and culture, needs no special demonstration. The city and the university furnish plenty of examples of learning-hoarding as well as money-hoarding misers. Are riches essential to, and productive of, happiness? (Matt. 19 [22]; Phil. 4 [11].) Do they enslave or free their possessor? (Rev. 3 [17, 18].)

Study VI. The Alternatives to Doing God's Will as a Life Purpose

FIFTH DAY

The Life Surrendered to Fame-seeking

Matt. 4 [5-7]; Luke 14 [19].

Read also carefully Mark 9 [33-35], 10 [35-45]; Luke 22 [24-26]; John 5 [44], 12 [43].

Milton characterizes the desire to attain fame as "that last infirmity of noble minds." It masters men who are slaves neither to self-indulgence nor to the passion for wealth. It is perhaps the subtlest of all the three alternatives to doing God's will as a life purpose. Many a religious worker who has completely mastered his passions and appetites, and is willing to work for a mere pittance, falls a victim to the ambition for leadership in his special field of work. To receive the applause of men, to see one's name in the newspaper, to be known as the possessor not of one but of five yoke of oxen, these are the enslaving life purposes of many men.

DeTocqueville says of Napoleon that he attained to the greatest height that any man ever can attain without virtue. Napoleon's sole ideal was his own fame. What might not his genius have accomplished for the world, had it not been enslaved to fame-seeking? Note how free Jesus was from the craving for notoriety (Phil. 2 [1-11]; Mark 7 [36]; Luke 5 [14-16]; John 6 [15]) and yet how truly a leader among men. Who was the slave and who was the master as we study the careers of Napoleon and Jesus?

Study VI. The Alternatives to Doing God's Will as a Life Purpose

SIXTH DAY

Pleasure, Wealth and Fame are not Wrong in Themselves, but They must be Our Servants not Our Masters

I Cor. 6 [12]; Matt. 6 [21, 33].

Read also carefully II Cor. 9 [8-15]; Mark 4 [19], 10 [29, 30]; Matt. 19 [28]; Luke 18 [28-30]; [Psalm 1 [4]].

"Seek ye first his kingdom and his righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you." In this verse Jesus is speaking of the temporal pleasures of life. Only the life surrendered to God which seeks first his kingdom is the free and happy life (see a fine passage on the joyfulness of Jesus in *Peabody,* Jesus Christ and the Christian Character, page 47 ff).

When a man surrenders his life to any one of the three alternatives he becomes a slave; but when he surrenders to God we have the resulting paradox that by the act he becomes absolutely free and a master of pleasure, wealth and fame; because God is love, and love is freedom (Rom. 8 [14-17], I John 4 [18]).

Study VI. The Alternatives to Doing God's Will as a Life Purpose

SEVENTH DAY—REVIEW

1. Does Matt. 6:[33] hold out a selfish motive for the service of God? Should we serve to obtain a reward? (Cf. James 4[10]; Heb. 11[6-26]; I Peter 3[9, 10-12].)

2. Should godliness ever be allowed to be a way of gain? (I Tim. 6[5]; cf. Mark 9[35], 10[28-31].)

3. In how far is it true that the good are prosperous?

4. "Be good and you will be great." Is this true?

5. What do Jesus and the Apostles mean by the terms wealth and riches?

STUDY VII

The Spiritual Crisis Involved in Facing the Issue of Surrender of Self —Its Symptoms and its Course

"And straightway the Spirit driveth him forth into the wilderness. And he was in the wilderness forty days tempted of Satan."
—*Mark 1:12,13.*

"The gospel of the kingdom of God is preached, and every man entereth violently into it." —*Luke 16:16.*

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In selecting the above cases from the large number which history and literature afford, I have chosen what might be termed "pure" cases. I have purposely avoided two classes: (1) Those in which this spiritual crisis which accompanies the act of complete self-surrender to God is closely connected with a break from positive sin (cf. Augustine, Bunyan, and numerous instances cited in the discussions of Starbuck, Coe and James); and (2) those in which it is associated with a decision to enter Foreign Missionary Service (which would include practically the whole range of missionary biography).

I have done this deliberately, in an attempt to demonstrate that a personal, conscious surrender of self to God,—involving beforehand a frank consideration and recognition of certain temporary advantages which self-indulgence, self-seeking and money-amassing have to offer but culminating in their deliberate renunciation in the face of these advantages,—is the normal preparation of all lives of power. I would not do injustice to gradual consecration, but would

raise the question whether there is not a positive loss to the world if a man allows his decision as to his attitude toward these matters to hang fire for many years. This decision as to attitude—one's working basis for life—is an entirely distinct thing from breaking with sins which have once fastened themselves upon one. Jesus had no cataclysmic break with sin; but he had a cataclysmic decision in regard to his attitude toward it. A sudden break with sin should be the abnormal thing; men ought to be born into, and grow into righteousness. But I fail to see how most human freewill agents can lay their life plans with two possibilities before them, reject the alluring alternative, and definitely enlist the forces of righteousness on their side, without being aware of it. If a man thinks he has already arrived at this state of absolute surrender of self to God's will by what he terms the process of gradual consecration why should he then object to sealing it with a definite, personal compact? Was not that precisely the trouble with the rich young ruler?

Study VII. The Spiritual Crisis Involved in Facing the Issue of Surrender of Self

FIRST DAY

The Facing of the Problem of Self-surrender—to do God's Will without Reservation—the Great Soul Crisis in most Lives of Spiritual Power

Matt. 4 [1].

"Once to every man and nation
Comes the moment to decide
In the strife of truth with falsehood,
For the good or evil side."

LOWELL: *The Present Crisis.*

Wherever we have the complete biography of the great leaders of Christian civilization, we find that most of their lives show a marked resemblance in the steps of the spiritual crisis through which they passed before entering upon their lives of power. Beginning with Jesus and Paul and passing down through the centuries we find the same successive stages so clearly marked in each case as to establish a general law of the process of self-surrender. Inasmuch as Jesus went through the same crisis in all its aspects at the beginning of his career, we can safely assume that not only the rebellious sinner but most men who would attain to a life of spiritual power must have a similar struggle; for as Pascal said, "It is the lot of every Christian to have those things happen to him which happened to our Lord Jesus Christ." Whether, then, they enlist with or surrender to God, few who would be true leaders of men can expect to escape this experience.

Study VII. The Spiritual Crisis Involved in Facing the Issue of Surrender of Self

SECOND DAY

The Decision is Preceded by a Period of Lonely Struggle and Uncertainty

Matt. 4 [1, 2]; Gal. 1 [15-17].

Jesus: "In the wilderness" (Luke 4 [1]; Matt. 4 [1]; Mark 1 [12]) "fasted forty days and forty nights."

Paul: "Straightway I communed not with flesh and blood . . . . but I went away into Arabia" (Gal. 1 [16, 17]).

Charles Kingsley: "I have been for the last hour on the seashore not dreaming but thinking deeply and strongly."

Horace Bushnell: Loneliness (see Life, pp. 53-60).

F. W. Robertson: Loneliness (see Life, pp. 109, 110).

Hugh Beaver: (See Life, pages 136, 137).

Frances Little: The Lady of the Decoration, pp. 209-211.

Macdonald: Robert Falconer, Chap. LI., "In the Desert."

Study VII. The Spiritual Crisis Involved in Facing the Issue of Surrender of Self

THIRD DAY

The Various Alternatives to Doing God's Will Present Themselves with Unwonted Attractiveness and There is Often a Feeling of Great Repulsion and Obstinacy toward Everything Christian

Matt. 4 [3, 5, 8, 9]; Acts 26 [9]; Rom. 7 [15-25], 9 [20, 21].

Jesus: "Being tempted of the devil" (Matt. 4 [1]).

Paul: "I persecuted the church of God and made havoc of it." Gal. 1 [13, 14]. (Paul has left no detailed record of his soul struggle during the lonely period in Arabia. Perhaps Titus 3 [3] is an echo of it.)

Horace Bushnell: Fascination for law (see Life).

F. W. Robertson: Repugnance for theology (see Life); so also Phillips Brooks.

"I fit into this life out here like a square peg in a round hole. I am not consecrated, I was never *called* to the foreign field, I love the world and the flesh even if I don't care especially for the devil, I don't believe the Lord makes the cook steal so I may be more patient, and I don't pray for wisdom in selecting a new pair of shoes."

Frances Little: *The Lady of the Decoration, page 147.*

Study VII. The Spiritual Crisis Involved in Facing the Issue of Surrender of Self

FOURTH DAY

The Final Act of Surrender or Enlistment is a Definite Conscious Act of Ethical Decision Between the Man and God Personally, Made without Reservation, in the Path, not of Inclination but of Duty; and is Generally Preceded by the Darkest Moments of Doubt, Obstinacy, and Fascination for the Other Life

Matt. 4 [10] (cf. vs. 8, 9, and Luke 12 [57]).

Jesus: "Get thee hence, Satan" (fascination recognized, cf. Matt. 16 [23]); "the Lord and him only"—without reservation; "thou shalt serve"—the path of duty.

Paul: "What shall I do, Lord?" Acts 22 [10].

Horace Bushnell in the privacy of his college room.

John Wesley: "I resolved to devote all my life to God—all my thoughts, words and actions."

F. W. Robertson in the Tyrol.

Phillips Brooks at Alexandria Seminary.

Frances Little: The Lady of the Decoration, pp. 209-211.

It should be noted that this decision must be made personally. Jesus refused to let a third person intervene and tell him what God's will was (Matt. 4 [7]). So later, in the determining as to what God's will was in a specific case, Jesus refuses to let Peter intervene (Matt. 16 [22, 23]). Paul refused to let the brethren decide for him (Acts 21 [11-14]) and taught independence (Phil. 2 [12]). Jesus' last rebuke was for this same reason (John 21 [21, 22]).

Study VII. The Spiritual Crisis Involved in Facing the Issue of Surrender of Self

FIFTH DAY

The Results of this Decisive Act are not Immediately Apparent although the Act of Decision Brings Peace and the Feeling of Revulsion Against Religion Begins to Fade Away

Col. 1 [6].
Matt. 4 [11]; Luke 8 [15], 21 [19], 24 [49].
Acts 26 [15, 16, 19, 20, 29]; James 5 [7, 8].
Heb. 11 [13]; I Peter 1 [6, 7].
Rev. 2 [3].

Note that the result in Jesus' case was not immediate peace, immediate certainty, and complete victory. The doubts and fascination of the other life are not completely swept away but return (Luke 4 [13], *for a season.* Cf. also Luke 22 [28], "Ye are they that have *continued* with me in my temptations"). But by the great decision their force has been broken. This decision often brings with it victory over some sin which had not before been overcome.

Matt. 4 [11], "angels"—"the joy of the uncommitted sin."

"It is true that this was not realized at once. It grew with the natural growth of years. The doubts were not yet all gone. The whole history of these struggling years cannot be better rendered than in these words of Tennyson, loved for their very familiarity:—

"'Perplext in faith, but pure in deeds,
At last he beat his music out.
There lives more faith in honest doubt,
Believe me, than in half the creeds.

"'He fought his doubts and gathered strength,
He would not make his judgment blind,
He faced the spectres of the mind
And laid them; thus he came at length

"'To find a stronger faith his own;
And power was with him in the night
Which makes the darkness and the light,
And dwells not in the light alone.'"

"His manner of dealing with mental questions, as he describes it, seems the most sincere and reasonable one possible:—

"'Never be in a hurry to believe; never try to conquer doubts against time. Time is one of the grand elements in thought as truly as in motion. If you cannot open a doubt today keep it till tomorrow; do not be afraid to keep it for whole years. One of the greatest talents in religious discovery is the finding how to hang up questions; and let them hang, without being at all anxious about them. Turn a free glance on them now and then as they hang; move freely about them, and see them first on one side and then on another, and by and by when you turn some corner of thought you will be delighted and astonished to see how quietly and easily they open their secret and let you in. What seemed perfectly insoluble will clear itself in a wondrous revelation. It will not hurt you, nor hurt the truth, if you should have some few questions left to be carried on with you when you go hence, for in that more luminous state, most likely they will soon be cleared, only a thousand others will be springing up even there, and you will go on dissolving still your new sets of questions, and growing mightier and more deep-seeing for eternal ages.'"

CHENEY: *Life and Letters of Horace Bushnell, pages 59, 60.*

"Entire satisfaction to the intellect is unattainable about any of the greater problems, and if you try to get to the bottom of them by argument, there is no bottom there; and therefore you make the matter worse . . . . the moment you cut off one, a hundred other heads will grow in its place. It would be a pity if all these problems could be solved. The joy of the intellectual life would be largely gone. I would not rob a man of his problems nor would I have another man rob

me of my problems. They are the delight of life, and the whole intellectual world would be stale and unprofitable if we knew everything."

DRUMMOND: *Dealing with Doubt.*

"Another frequent mistake to be carefully avoided is that, while you surrender and renounce all thought of making up a plan or choosing out a plan for yourself, as one that you had set by your own will, you also give up the hope or expectation that God will set you in any scheme of life where the whole course of it will be known or set down beforehand. If you go to him to be guided, he will guide you, but he will not comfort your distrust or half-trust of him by showing you his chart of all his purposes concerning you. He will only show you into a way where, if you go cheerfully and trustfully forward, he will show you on still further. No contract will be made with you, save that he engages, if you trust him, to lead you into the best things all the way through. And if they are better than you can either ask or think beforehand, they will be none the worse for that."

BUSHNELL: *The New Life, page 21.*

See GRENFELL: *A Man's Faith, pages 11-14.*

Study VII. The Spiritual Crisis Involved in Facing the Issue of Surrender of Self

SIXTH DAY

A Man's own Individuality and Personality is not Lost by thus Conforming to the Divine Will but on the Contrary it is Marvelously Intensified

Gal. 4 [5-7]; I Cor. 3 [6]; John 8 [32, 36], 15 [2, 5]; I John 2 [5].

Jesus, who was perfectly obedient, had the most unique and individual personality that the world has ever seen.

"However irregular the forms of this conversion according to some theological standards, there can be no doubt as to its reality as a *conversion* in the original sense of that word. It was a complete *turning about* of the life. It changed not only the outward purpose (for he [Horace Bushnell] gave up the law for the gospel), but the very fibre and tissues of his being. No, it did not change, but, rather, breathed into his mortal frame the breath of an immortal life and vigor, vitalized and inspired his intellect, gave luminous insight in place of 'desolating doubts' and set him free. The effect was not to neutralize but to heighten his individuality. If he was before Horace Bushnell, he was doubly Bushnell now. No salient point, no rugged, racy trait, was lost. He seemed, indeed, now first to have found himself."

CHENEY: *Life and Letters of Horace Bushnell, pages 59, 60.*

Note the originality of the man who lives the surrendered life.

"The other-worldliness of such a character is the thing that strikes you; you are not prepared for what it will do or say or become next, for it moves from a far-off centre and in spite of its transparency and sweetness that presence fills you always with awe. A man never feels the discord of his own life, never hears the jar of the machinery by

which he tries to manufacture his own good points till he has stood in the stillness of such a presence. Then he discerns the difference between growth and work."

DRUMMOND: *Natural Law in the Spiritual World, pages 134, 135 (Potts Edition).*

"Now the ideal man has no deeper prayer than that. He wants to get into the great current of will which flows silently out of Eternity and swiftly back into Eternity again. His only chance of happiness, of usefulness, of work is to join the living rill of his will to that. Other Christians miss it or settle on the bank of the great stream; but he will be among the forces and energies and powers, that he may link his weakness with God's greatness and his simplicity with God's majesty, that he may become a force, an energy, a power for duty and God. Perhaps God may do something with him. Certainly God will do something with him—for it is God who worketh in him both to will and to do of his good pleasure. . . . . You give everything to God. God gives it all back again and more. You present your body a living sacrifice that you may prove God's will. You shall prove it by getting back your body—a glorified body."

DRUMMOND: *The Ideal Life.*

"Nor is it any detraction from such a kind of life that the helm of its guidance is, by the supposition, to be in God and not in our own will and wisdom. This, in fact, is its dignity. . . . . How different, how inspiring and magnificent, instead, to live by holy consent, a life all discovery; to see it unfolding, moment by moment, a plan of God, our own life-plan conceived in his paternal love; each event, incident, experience, whether bright or dark, having its mission from him and revealing, either now or in its future issues, the magnificence of his favoring counsel; to be sure, in the dark day, of a light that will follow, that loss will terminate in gain, that trial will issue in rest, doubt in satisfaction, suffering in patience, patience in purity, and all in a consummation of greatness and dignity that even God will look on with a

smile! How magnificent, how strong in its repose, how full of rest is such a kind of life. . . . . God will lead every man into a singular, original and peculiar life, without any study of singularity on his part."

BUSHNÉLL: *The New Life, page 47 ff.*

Study VII. The Spiritual Crisis Involved in Facing the Issue of Surrender of Self

SEVENTH DAY—REVIEW

1. If most great leaders have this soul struggle is there such a thing as the unconscious doing of God's will?

2. For example, in how far can the following men be said to have been doing the will of God: Socrates? (Cf. Matt. 13 [17].) Augustus? (Cf. Luke 2 [1-5].) Napoleon? (Cf. Isaiah 44 [24-28], 45 [1-7], especially vs. 5 and 7.) Judas?

3. Why the preliminary period of loneliness?

4. Can a Christian's soul life be right if he is afraid to listen to a missionary talk or read a missionary biography?

5. Was the old idea of hereditary trades right?

6. What is the meaning of the descent of the Holy Spirit? (Acts 2 [1-4].) Is it coincident with or a subsequent issue of self-surrender? May it be long delayed? (Luke 24 [49].)

STUDY VIII

To Find Out and to Do God's Will for One's Life is an Achievement Possible for Any Man

"But unto *each one of us* was the grace given according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Wherefore he saith, When he ascended on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men .... till we *all* attain unto the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, ... unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." —*Eph. 4:7, 8, 13.*

"Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if *any man* hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." —*Rev. 3:20.*

"If *any man* willeth to do his will, he shall know of the teaching, whether it is of God, or whether I speak of myself." —*John 7:17.*

"Have ye not read even this scripture; The stone which the builders rejected, the same was made the head of the corner." —*Mark 12:10.*

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Study VIII. To Find Out and to Do God's Will for One's Life is an Achievement Possible for Any Man

FIRST DAY

The Execution of God's Great Plan Requires the Most Brilliant Powers of Body, Mind, Heart and Soul of Which Man is Capable

I Cor. 14 [20]; Matt. 10 [16], 22 [11-14, 46].

The founder of Christianity stands unmatched among the great men of history in the even balance of his physical, intellectual, social and spiritual powers. We have no record of illness in Jesus' life. He was never outwitted in an intellectual encounter. No call upon his friendship ever went unanswered. What he exemplified in himself he set as the ideal of his followers. They were to serve God with the full powers of body, mind, heart and soul. Waste, undeveloped possibilities, misused opportunities, received from him the most severe condemnation. He was constantly teaching that the kingdom of God demanded the best that men could give.

Study VIII. To Find Out and to Do God's Will for One's Life is an Achievement Possible for Any Man

SECOND DAY

Yet this Task Has Never Been Reserved for Those Alone Whom the World Regards as Specially Gifted

I Cor. 1 [26-29], 12 [4-30]; II Cor. 8 [11, 12]; Col. 1 [28]; Matt. 11 [25, 26], 20 [1-16], 22 [1-10]; James 2 [5].

In direct contrast to this stern demand of Jesus is his constant practice of enlisting the frailest and most unpromising lives for his great undertaking.

"When one thinks of the enterprise to be committed to their hands, and considers the low estate of the Twelve, his feeling is amazement and disappointment. . . . . Were there no men of standing and education, who had enough faith in Jesus and enough devotion to religion to undertake this high office? . . . . Why should he not have called Nicodemus . . . . that high-minded and ingenuous young ruler . . . . and that nameless scholar . . . . Jairus . . . . Joseph of Arimathea . . . . the nobleman of Cana . . . . Manaen . . . . the goodman of Galilee whom Jesus used as father in the Parable of the Prodigal Son . . . . Gamaliel . . . . Saul . . . . the host of the 'upper room' and that gentle soul Lazarus? So the Master would have had twelve apostles whom the nation would have trusted, and whom the council would not have flouted."

WATSON: *The Life of the Master, pages 190, 191.*

Study VIII To Find Out and to Do God's Will for One's Life is an Achievement Possible for Any Man

THIRD DAY

God Enlists and Uses Mightily for the Execution of His Plan Those Who are Frail in Body and Mind

I Cor. 12 [22]; II Cor. 13 [4] f; Rom. 4 [17]; Matt. 11 [25-29]. Luke 14 [13]; Heb. 12 [12, 13].

Study carefully the Scripture references for today's lesson. With what physical drawbacks did Paul have to contend? (II Cor. 12 [7, 8].) Read during this week, if possible, the biography of some of the world's "masters of fate in the physical realm"—David Brainerd, R. L. Stevenson, Francis Parkman, Henry Martyn, William Johnson of Liberia, Helen Keller or others.

For a wonderful instance of God's mighty use of the frail-minded see *Sutter,* A Colony of Mercy, which tells the story of Pastor von Bodelschwingh's work with this class in Germany.

Study VIII. To Find Out and to Do God's Will for One's Life is an Achievement Possible for Any Man

FOURTH DAY

God has a Place in His Plan for the Timid and Unpopular as Well as for Those Whom the World Has Rejected Because of Misfortune or Sin

Rom. 5 [6], 9 [25, 26] (cf. Hosea 1 [10], 2 [23]); I Tim. 1 [12-16]; Mark 2 [17], 12 [10, 11].

Matt. 9 [13], 10 [6], 11 [28, 29], 18 [12-14], 20 [6, 7], 21 [16].

Luke 1 [48, 52], 3 [5], 6 [35] (margin), 9 [49, 50], 15 (entire chapter).

Heb. 11 [32-40] (esp. v. 34); I Peter 2 [4]; John 6 [37].

A far more difficult problem than that of the physically frail or the weak-minded in any community is that of the outcast—both the self-ostracised, the timid and sensitive, and the social outcast, the breaker of moral or civil law. Jesus not only welcomes all such men into the circle of his followers, but his life was given to them. He was the friend of publicans and sinners. He came not to call the righteous but sinners. From such men the mightiest instruments for good in his kingdom have been made. In connection with this day's study consult the biography of Jerry McAuley and S. H. Hadley's "Down in Water Street."

Study VIII. To Find Out and to Do God's Will for One's Life is an Achievement Possible for Any Man

FIFTH DAY

Regeneration and Transformation Come into a Human Life Giving it Sufficient Power for its Tasks, no Matter how Frail and Weak it May Have Been, when that Life has Willed to Know and to Do the Exact Work for which God had Intended it

I Cor. 1 [30]; Rom. 11 [23], 14 [4]; Eph. 1 [19], 2 [1-10], 4 [13].
Mark 4 [8, 20], 6 [2, 3], 10 [27]; Matt. 21 [42]; Luke 5 [30-32], 19 [10].
Heb. 7 [25]; I Peter 1 [23].

Jesus brings to the world a message of hope. No man has fallen beyond possibility of regeneration. The simple question is whether or not the individual is willing to be transformed and will pay the price of complete surrender to God's transforming power. What is that price?

"If any man . . . . takes this seriously and means business; if he means for the future not to keep up the sham fight that he has been pretending to wage and means to get to the bottom of things, let me ask him for a few days from this time to treat himself as a man who has been very ill and dare not do anything. Let him consider himself as a convalescent for a few weeks and take care where he goes, what he reads, what he looks at, and the people he speaks to. He is not strong enough for the outer air. When he first begins the new life he is young and tender. Therefore let him beware of the first few days. Mortality is greatest among children for the first few hours; then it is greater for the first few days; then it is great for the next few months and lessens as the children grow older. If you are careful not to catch cold for the first few weeks after you begin to lead a new life, you will succeed; but if you do tomorrow what you did today, you will go wrong, because you are not strong enough to resist. You will have to build up this new body, cell by cell, day by day, just as the old body of temptation has been built up. If any man . . . . knows any other man who is in that conval-

escent condition, let him take care, and neither by jest or word, or temptation, throw that man back. Stand by him if you know such a man. If you are such a man, do not be ashamed to get somebody else to back you and go along with you. Very few men can live a solitary Christian life. You will find it a great source of strength to get another man's life wound about you. You can help each other."

DRUMMOND: *Stones Rolled Away, pages 73, 74.*

Study VIII. To Find Out and to Do God's Will for One's Life is an Achievement Possible for Any Man

SIXTH DAY

The Miracle of Obedience

I Cor. 2 [9]; II Cor. 5 [17]; Rom. 6 [4]; Eph. 3 [20]; Phil. 3 [20, 21]; Luke 21 [14, 15]; I Peter 1 [23].

John 3 [3], 5 [20], 14 [12].

See *Drummond,* The Ascent of Man, Chapter X.—"Involution."

"Is there then a mighty, miraculous law of God, underlying the life of men, the processes of which may be observed, a law whereby weak men are made strong, whereby the ordinary man can become extraordinary, a law which no man can create or master but a law of which any man may avail himself if he will? Are the phrases which were so constantly on Paul's lips, 'Him that enabled me,' 'The strength which God supplieth,' 'Newness of life,' 'My God shall fulfil every need,' 'I can do all things through him,' 'His working which worketh in me mightily' mere empty phrases of rhetoric, or are they the genuine witnesses to a mysterious power which had made of Paul a new creature? When such a thought first dawns upon one its possibilities are well-nigh overwhelming. President Jordan tells us that one half of the nominal strength of the young men of America is today wasted in dissipation, gross or petty. . . . . But what of the fourfold or the tenfold strength which God intended to supply to men which they have never claimed, and which, after all, was really their normal strength in God's thought for their life?"

A Life with a Purpose, page 19.

Study VIII. To Find Out and to Do God's Will for One's Life is an Achievement Possible for Any Man

SEVENTH DAY—REVIEW

1. If Jesus will accept all classes of men why are there so many outcasts in the world today?

2. With what different kinds of criminals did Jesus have dealings?

3. Against what class of men were his fiercest denunciations hurled?

4. What was the object of these denunciations?

STUDY IX

God's Will May be Done in any Honorable Trade or Profession, Either at Home or Abroad

"Go ye into *all* the world, and preach the gospel to *the whole* creation." —*Mark 16:15.*

"The hour cometh when neither in this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, shall ye worship the Father." —*John 4:21.*

"The kingdom of God is in the midst of you."
—*Luke 17:21* (margin).

"Let each man abide in that calling wherein he was called. Brethren, let each man, wherein he was called, therein abide with God." —*I Cor. 7:20,24.*

"If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? But now hath God set the members each one of them in the body, even as it pleased him." —*I Cor. 12:17,18.*

"Wherefore also we make it our aim, whether *at home* or *absent,* to be well pleasing unto him. For we must all be made manifest before the judgment-seat of Christ; that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he hath done, whether it be good or bad." —*II Cor. 5:9,10.*

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Study IX. God's Will May be Done in any Honorable Trade or Profession

FIRST DAY

Jesus and the Apostles Laymen, not Members of the Professional Clergy

Matt. 13 [54-56]; John 7 [15] (Jesus).

1 Thess. 2 [9]; II Thess. 3 [8-12]; I Cor. 4 [12], 9 [1-18]; II Cor. 11 [7], 12 [13]; Acts 18 [1-4], 20 [33-35] (Paul).

I Thess. 4 [11, 12]; I Peter 4 [10].

When we compare the religious leaders of the first century with those of the twentieth we notice one striking difference. The leaders of the first century did not regard religious work as a regular paid profession. Jesus received no money in payment for his work as an evangelist. He was known not as a professional clergyman but as "the carpenter" (Mark 6 [1-6]). Paul expressly states (see eight references cited above) that he took no remuneration for his ministry although it would have been right to have done so, but that he supported himself entirely by his trade, which we know was that of tentmaking (Acts 18 [1-4]). In the early church it was taken for granted that a Christian should have his regular trade (II Thess. 3 [11, 12]); the extent of his ministry in the church and its nature was to be regulated by the gifts which he possessed (I Peter 4 [10]).

Jesus and the Apostles, then, were laymen, not members of the professional clergy. Jesus' ministry was one, not primarily through the channel of the synagogue and the established clergy, but rather through that of the field, the hillside, the marketplace and the layman.

Study IX. God's Will May be Done in any Honorable Trade or Profession

SECOND DAY

No Honorable Profession or Trade Secular in God's Plan. All Must be Ministries

I Cor. 7 [20, 24], 10 [31], 12 [4-11], 12 [31]; II Cor. 5 [10]; Rom. 12 [6-8], 16 [23].

Col. 3 [17], 4 [14]; Eph. 4 [1-16]; I Tim. 4 [4, 5]; Titus 3 [13].

Matt. 9 [9-13]; Luke 3 [10-14], 5 [3-11]; John 21 [1-6].

Jesus emphasized a great truth which had so far made but little impression upon men—that the professions and trades of men should not be divided into two hostile camps—the religious and the secular; but that every honorable occupation should be a Christian ministry. John the Baptist had grasped this idea when he advised the tax collectors and soldiers who came to him in repentance not to renounce their callings but to make these latter ministries to men by the example of honorable living in them. James, John, Peter and Andrew had been fishers before Jesus called them; they returned to their trade afterwards. (John 21 [1-6].) Matthew, it is true, left his old occupation, probably because he did not trust himself to continue in it; we are certainly to suppose that he took up some new occupation for his support. In Paul's circle of associates were a physician, a lawyer and a city treasurer (see verses cited above). Jesus nowhere more clearly emphasizes this truth of the lay ministry than in Luke 8 [38, 39].

"Though we may never be famous or powerful or called to heroic suffering or acts of self-denial which will vibrate through history . . . . though we are neither intended to be apostles, nor missionaries, nor martyrs, but to be common people living in common houses, spending the day in common offices or common kitchens; yet doing the will of God there, we shall do as much as apostle or missionary or martyr, seeing that they can do no more than do God's will where they are,

even so we can do as much where we are—and answer the end of our life as truly, faithfully, triumphantly as they."

DRUMMOND: *The Ideal Life, page 264.*

"You are never to complain of your birth, your training, your employments, your hardships, never to fancy that you could be something if only you had a different lot and sphere assigned you. . . . . Hence it was that an apostle required his converts to abide, each one in that calling wherein he was called; to fill his place till he opens a way, by filling it, to some other: the bondman to fill his house of bondage with love and duty, the laborer to labor, the woman to be a woman, the men to show themselves men—all to acknowledge God's hand in their lot, and seek to coöperate with that good design which he most assuredly cherishes for them."

BUSHNELL: *The New Life, pages 19, 20.*

Study IX. God's Will May be Done in any Honorable Trade or Profession

THIRD DAY

The Professional Clergyman Necessitated by the Need of Expert Leadership among the Laymen Who without Such Stimulus Were Either Unable or Unwilling to Grasp the Idea of Their Responsibility

I Tim. 4 [1-16].

Whence, then, in this ministry of laymen arose the necessity for the professional clergyman who receives a regular salary for his work? The rightful place of the church and of the professional clergyman Jesus recognized in his day (see *Speer,* Principles of Jesus, "Jesus and the Church of God"); and he explicitly teaches that a Christian minister may receive salary for his services (Matt. 10 [10]).

Was not the professional clergyman in the Christian church called into being by the need of expert leadership felt among the laymen? So long as Jesus was on earth he supplied this need. After an interval Paul served without pay as inspirer and instructor of the disciples. But as the greatest of the Apostles approaches the end of his life he sees clearly the necessity for a successor who can give more time to the organization and leadership of the fast growing church than has been required in the past. In the 4th chapter of First Timothy we have the story of Paul's selection and instruction of one such leader. The laymen have been either unwilling or unable to grasp the conception of their trades as ministries. Some have fallen away. Practical efficiency in the church requires another leader. Timothy is henceforth to give himself *wholly* (I Tim. 4 [15]) to the instruction of others (mainly by that most potent of all methods of instruction—his own example, I Tim. 4 [12]). It is noteworthy that in neither of the letters to Timothy does Paul make reference to the fact that he received no pay for his religious work, but he expressly directs that henceforth compensation is to be paid for genuine expert leadership (I Tim. 5 [17, 18]).

Study IX. God's Will May be Done in any Honorable Trade or Profession

FOURTH DAY

The Place of the Church and of the Professional Clergyman

I Cor. 9^{14}; I Tim. $5^{17, 18}$; Matt. 10^{10}; John 10^{2-5}; $17^{18, 19}$.

1. The church is not a close corporation which alone has the right to dispense salvation—demonstrated by Luther.

2. Seminary training and ordination does not necessarily give spiritual authority—proved by cases of D. L. Moody, R. E. Speer, J. R. Mott.

3. The clergy are not an opposition party or society to the secular occupations.

4. The church is not the place to which the great mass of the world comes to be converted. The great mass of the world has never come to church except when compelled to, and it never will. It is perfectly natural that it should not.

5. The clergyman is not a convenience to whom the layman can delegate all his heart work that calls for sympathy—care of poor, outcast, bereaved, etc.

6. The church is not the place to which the layman is to come to get culture and æsthetic enjoyment.

The function of the professional clergyman in the church is that which busied Jesus in his relations with the Twelve. The church is a training school in method and a centre of inspiration for the *Christian layman* and for *him only*. It aims not primarily to do the direct evangelization and to bring the kingdom of God itself without a medium, but rather to train and inspire the Christian layman to go forth as its representative into his trade and evangelize that. The test of the efficiency of a church is not the numbers who come to it but its answer to the question whether any laymen go out *from it* to Christianize their respective professions.

The test of the efficiency of our work in the Christian Associations is not the number of unconverted men who come

to our meetings. They never have been many and they never will be. The test is the number of Bible groups and men we have actually working in the dormitories and the fraternities. Missions in the Foreign Field have been reorganized along this line in recent years and almost all the evangelization is now done by the native lay workers in their own trades and communities. The missionary is mainly the trainer of these native workers. The wonderful success of the Young Men's Christian Association is largely due to the fact that it represents Jesus' own method—evangelization directly by the layman, and indirectly by the clergyman.

Should the leader of this group of evangelizing laymen be paid for his services in the highly professional work of training leaders? Certainly, but only those who receive the benefit of the training should be asked to pay. Should he receive a theological training? In general, yes. He ought to be intellectually the superior of all his students. Should he be ordained? Yes, in general, in order that there may be a check upon unworthy men getting into places of leadership.

Should the *laymen* accept pay for their heart work with their unconverted mates? Never. Only when called upon for executive work in leading or to teach other Christian laymen how to do the work should they accept pay.

Study IX. God's Will May be Done in any Honorable Trade or Profession

FIFTH DAY

The Evangelization of the World to be Directly Accomplished by Laymen

I Thess. 1 [8]; I Cor. 12 [17, 18]; II Cor. 2 [14]; I Tim. 2 [8]; Luke 17 [21] (margin); John 4 [21].

If Jesus and his twelve Apostles represent the model church it becomes at once apparent that it must be God's plan to accomplish the evangelization of the world directly not by clergymen but by laymen. The clergyman gathers the laymen about him, instructs them in methods and inspires them with motive; the laymen go forth into the world having caught the meaning of the great truth of Jesus—"the kingdom of God is in the midst of you"—i.e. that not in the church edifice nor in a Zion city (John 4 [21]) but right in one's own profession, wherever one has intercourse with men, there is the place where he, not the clergyman, can best accomplish the coming of the kingdom of God. The tentmaker among the tentmakers; the fisherman among the other fishermen casting their nets; you, the teacher among your colleagues and pupils as you teach; you, the physician or lawyer, among your patients or clients as you practice; you, the engineer, among your assistants, especially among the Italians who dig the ditches for your survey—wherever a layman is in contact with a body of men, there is his parish for active evangelization. And why is this evangelization by laymen God's chosen method? The Christian layman who is a specialist in his line alone has access to the minds and hearts of his associates. He alone can translate the life and teaching of Jesus into terms which his associates can understand and will respect. Such work as Professor Jenks' will have more effect on the sociologists of the country than many sermons. The next generation will see the extension of Professor Jenks' idea into all the callings and trades by Christian laymen in

these trades. To expect one clergyman to preach the gospel acceptably to the unconverted of forty different kinds of specialized callings, each with its own viewpoint and special vernacular, is as ridiculous as to expect him to be able to preach acceptably in forty different languages.

And how is the layman to accomplish this evangelization? Is he to preach and pray and scatter tracts or give Christian counsel or lead a Bible class? Not at first. The greatest joy of his life as years go by and as he comes to have the complete soul-confidence of his associates will be in just such services. His work can never be complete without such a climax. But his first step in evangelization is to become a master in his special calling and in the life and teaching of Jesus translated into his own calling and his own life, so that he may have the complete respect and confidence of his associates. For their sakes he sanctifies himself oftentimes by hard technical study (John 17 [19]). Then he consecrates his life to the accomplishment of three things among his associates—that they may be righteous, happy and contented, not only on the surface but in their heart life within—in the Holy Ghost (Rom. 14 [17]). In the little circle where his calling is he makes it his ideal that so far as lies in his power there shall henceforth be no sin-bound men, no sad men and no disheartened men.

"He who cannot feel the humanity of his neighbor because he is different from himself in education, habits, opinions, morals, circumstances, objects, is unfit, if not unworthy, to aid him."

MACDONALD: *Robert Falconer, page 374.*

Study IX. God's Will May be Done in any Honorable Trade or Profession

SIXTH DAY

The Task of a Christian Layman Therefore as Difficult as that of a Minister or Missionary. No Greater Hypocrite than a Sham Christian Layman

Matt. 7 [13, 14]; Luke 13 [23-30]; John 21 [15-22].

THE SHEEP LOOK UP

"The sheep look up and are not fed."—*Lycidas.*

"Beating the air with threat'ning hands,
The Demagogue defiant stands,
Shouting beside the busy street,
While round him hundreds hungry bleat,—
'The sheep look up and are not fed.'

"With eyes on manuscript attent,
On theologic doctrine bent,
The Preacher often scowls his views,
Nor knows the starving in his pews,—
'The sheep look up and are not fed.'

"And oft in academic halls,
Hid from the world by cloist'ring walls,
The Teacher, in his learning's pride,
Forgets the pupil at his side,—
'The sheep look up and are not fed.'

"O men of Christ, sent forth to preach
The Better Way, the truth to teach,
Still is He asking, 'Lov'st thou me?'
Still is our proof of loyalty
That those who hunger shall be fed."

JOHN FINLEY: *Outlook, 16 December, 1905.*

The difference, then, between the clergyman and the Christian layman is the same as the difference between the instructor at West Point and the cadets under him. The

instructor should, perhaps, have been a fighter in the past in order to give the most practical instruction and to command respect; he should *be able* at any time, perhaps, to take the field himself. But his business is not to fight. He is not expected to fight. He is expected to teach men how.

The prevalent modern idea that, if a man decides not to be a missionary or a minister he is relieved from all further responsibility for Christian work, is utterly false and pernicious. The decision not to be a clergyman, if a man be a Christian at all, is in fact his act of enlistment in active evangelization. The clergyman may spend much time in his study with the theory of religion. We shall find no fault with him if he does. But the layman *must evangelize.* The idea that all the Christian layman is under obligations to do is to be an officer in the church, make a regular contribution or hold down a pew on Sunday, is pagan. It is just as ridiculous as if at the outbreak of a war the cadets at West Point and all the graduates should club together and hire the instructors there to go to the front and do the fighting while they either sit and look on, hear the reports from the front or listen to the military band.

Two deductions follow from the hypothesis that Jesus and the Twelve are the model for us to follow. The first is that the task of the ordinary Christian layman in bringing righteousness, joy and peace in his profession is the highest trust in the world. It is not a matter of inclination whether a man shall undertake it or not; it is his duty. Only in this way at home and abroad can the evangelization of the world be accomplished. Such work is often more difficult than that of the ordained minister or missionary. It requires a daily battle with indulgence, greed and pride which the clergyman, surrounded by the safeguards of his profession, often escapes. It is as difficult to be a layman as to be a clergyman.

The second deduction is this. There is no greater hypocrite than a sham Christian layman—the man who says that there is so much work to be done at home that he will not go abroad and then, instead of living the life of heroism and martyrdom in his own profession against self-indulgence,

ambition and greed in the attempt to bring righteousness, joy and peace among men, settles down to amass, and then to spend his income. Such a man does far more to retard the progress of God's kingdom than the clergyman who falls into sin. The latter is easily detected and universally scorned. The sham Christian layman can rarely be detected or shown up in this life. He is answerable only to God. The world can never know his motive in purchasing the three or four or five yoke of oxen, in buying the field or in marrying the wife. Was it in order better to serve men or merely to serve self? Either alternative is possible in every case. Which it was in his case God and he alone know.

You have said that you do not feel qualified or good enough to be a clergyman or missionary. You rightly assert that God's will can and must be done in every honorable trade or profession; hence you will be a layman. Good! *but do you dare to be a layman,* to leave the protected path of the ministry for the hardest of all paths? It is a narrow way. If you are a hero, "strive to enter in," says Jesus (Luke 13 [24]); but he also asks, "Are you able?" (Mark 10 [38].)

Study IX. God's Will May be Done in any Honorable Trade or Profession

SEVENTH DAY—REVIEW

1. In organizing a church after Jesus' method should the Christian laymen seek their leader or should the leader enlist the laymen?

2. Has a group of laymen thus organized the right to partake of the Lord's Supper among themselves?

3. What gives to one layman rather than to any other in a group the right to assume the leadership of that group?

4. Can God's will be done in every profession, e.g. liquor-selling, saloon-keeping, etc.?

5. Should one ever receive money for the conversion of others? (I Peter 5^{2}.)

6. Outline in a few sentences the relations that should exist between a layman and his clergyman; between a layman and his constituents.

STUDY X

The Necessity for Absolute Surrender of Self

"And Jesus looking upon him loved him, and said unto him, *One thing* thou lackest." —*Mark 10: 21.*

"So therefore whosoever he be of you that renounceth not *all* that he hath, he cannot be my disciple." —*Luke 14: 33.*

"Take now thy son, thine *only* son, whom thou lovest, even Isaac, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering. . . . . *And Abraham* . . . . *took* . . . . *Isaac his son* . . . . *and went*. . . . . Abraham, ... Lay not thy hand upon the lad, neither do thou anything unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing that thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from me." —*Gen. 22: 2, 3, 11, 12.*

"Thy will be done forever and ever, O Lord, without *if* or *but*."

St. Françoise de Chantal.

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Study X. The Necessity for Absolute Surrender of Self

FIRST DAY

If God's Will may be Done in any Profession, Why not then Select the First Career That Presents Itself, or the Pleasantest, Without Facing the Possibility of the Dangerous and Disagreeable Careers

[Isaiah 53 [6].]
Luke 14 [28-32], 22 [33, 34].

In the preceding lesson we tried to establish the proposition that God's will can and must be done in every profession. Why then, asks the perplexed inquirer, all this hue and cry about the dangerous and disagreeable professions—the missionary question, for example? Let each man adopt whatever calling he prefers, or better still let him take the first work that presents itself. Must every man, whether he ultimately goes or not, face this bothering missionary question before he decides on his life work?

To this we answer unreservedly, yes. In the first place it is obvious on reflection that if everybody took the attitude just mentioned there would be no missionaries at all, and Jesus certainly laid back on us (Mark 16 [15]) the burden of the foreign world which we in our selfish wilfulness had left to him alone (Isaiah 53 [6]). Again, many careers which at the start appear to be dangerous and disagreeable, in time turn out to be the pleasantest possible, and *vice versa*. Many a man who has merely gratified his own desires in the choice of his career confesses after the lapse of years that he has made a failure of it all. Clearly then we have omitted some factor in our discussion of the layman's work and ministry. What is this factor?

Study X. The Necessity for Absolute Surrender of Self

SECOND DAY

God's Will may be Done in any Profession, but Unless the Man is in That Profession by God's Appointment it will not be

I Cor. 7 [20, 24], 12 [17, 18]; Rom. 1 [6, 7]; John 4 [34], 5 [30], 6 [38].

In order to do God's will in even the humblest occupation —shoemaking, for example—a man must be there by God's appointment. In other words the lawyer, doctor, teacher, merchant as well as the clergyman must be called to his profession. It is true that Paul says that we are to remain in our secular callings, but men fail to note that he presupposes that we have been "called" to those callings (I Cor. 7 [24]). The eye is not to desire to be the ear or the nose. Why? Because God set each one of the members in the body *even as it pleased him* (I Cor. 12 [18]).

Only one thing can give a man complete joy and power in his work. That one thing is the sure conviction that he is in that work—medicine, law, teaching, business, ministry, at home or abroad—"called of God." Nearly every letter of Paul begins with just such a burning conviction about himself. ("Paul called to be an apostle. An apostle through the will of God. An apostle not from men but through Jesus Christ and God. An apostle of Jesus Christ through the commandment of God." Rom. 1 [1]; I Cor. 1 [1]; II Cor. 1 [1]; Gal. 1 [1]; Eph. 1 [1]; Col. 1 [1]; I Tim. 1 [1]; II Tim. 1 [1]). The best test a man can put to himself is to ask and to answer fairly this question: "Dare I assert that I am a lawyer, teacher, business man, doctor, 'not from men but through Jesus Christ—called of God—according to the commandment of God'?"

This conviction of mission which brings joy and power can only come to a man who has enlisted with no reservations for any service that his general may see fit to assign to him, and who knows that he has received a particular order from that commander which assigns him a specific task to do.

Study X. The Necessity for Absolute Surrender of Self

THIRD DAY

The Parallel from the Enlistment of the Soldier

I Tim. 6 [12-14]; II Tim. 2 [4]; Luke 9 [57-62]; Heb. 11 [8].

No parallel illustrates so well the duty of the true Christian in this matter as that of the soldier. When the soldier enlists, he does not make his choice of guard duty, camp duty or service at the front, but he pledges his willingness to do anything, to make any sacrifice, to give his life if need be, whenever and wherever his commander may see fit. Now as a matter of fact the majority of soldiers who enlist are never called upon to make the supreme sacrifice of their lives. Nine tenths receive only the glory and the spoils at the end of the campaign. But it is absolutely necessary that when they started out every one of the ten tenths should have been willing to make this sacrifice had it been necessary. What would an army ever accomplish whose soldiers said: "We will drill and parade as long as there is no danger, but when the enemy appears please excuse us"? Such men are no more soldiers than sutlers, camp hangers-on.

In the same way it stands to reason that nine tenths of those who enlist in Jesus' army will not be compelled to make supreme sacrifices. The majority must work in routine paths. They will share his glory and the spoils of his conquests (peace, art, literature, culture), but every one of these nine tenths who does not go must have been willing to go when he started out had the orders come from the commander. Otherwise he was not an enlisted soldier in the army of Jesus. He was rather a sutler, a camp hanger-on, the sort of man of whom John speaks (I John 2 [19]), "They went out from us but they were not of us." Luke has preserved for us a picture of Jesus enlisting soldiers for his army. His method, which has sometimes been characterized as cruel (see Study V, Fifth Day), becomes clear and is seen to be absolutely just when we

consider the matter in this light (Luke 9 [57-62]). No soldier on service entangleth himself in the affairs of this life—he is always ready to march at a moment's notice; and no man having put hand to the plough and turning back is fit for the kingdom of God.

Study X. The Necessity for Absolute Surrender of Self

FOURTH DAY

God Does not Ask all Men to Make the Supreme Sacrifice or to Endure Great Suffering but He Requires that all be Willing to do so

Mark 5 [18, 19].
John 7 [17].
Gen. 22 [1-18].

Here is the matter stated in its simplest terms. God does not in fact ask all men to make the supreme sacrifice but he requires unconditionally that they all be willing to do so. The story of Abraham and Isaac teaches this truth so vividly that little further explanation is necessary. Read the whole account (Gen. 22 [1-18]) and study carefully the requirement of God and the attitude of Abraham.

"Our God is a jealous God. He will be either Lord of all or Lord not at all." JOHN R. MOTT.

"A heart not quite subdued to God is an imperfect element in which his will can never live."
DRUMMOND: *The Ideal Life, page 316.*

Study X. The Necessity for Absolute Surrender of Self

FIFTH DAY

The Spirit of the Hero and of the Martyr Needed in Every Profession

II Cor. 11 [23-27]; Eph. 6 [10-20].

Mark 8 [31-38], 10 [29, 30]; Matt. 5 [10-12], 10 [16-39], 16 [24]; Luke 21 [17].

Heb. 12 [1-4]; 10 [32-35], 13 [12, 13]; John 12 [24], 15 [18] f (esp. v. 20).

"It is the lot of every *Christian* to have those things happen to him that happened to our Lord Jesus Christ."

PASCAL.

Beware of the man who has no enemies. He is a time-server with his weathervane up to follow every wind that blows. Jesus Christ had enemies. Paul had enemies. Henry Drummond had enemies. Washington and Lincoln had enemies. Every man who attacks sin either by word or example has enemies. God and mammon do not go together, and the fight against sin in one's own profession will furnish the moral substitute for actual war which Professor James asserts that the young men of the present day need if they are to remain strong and virile.

A man may *have* enemies without *being* an enemy to a single individual in the world. It was in that sense that Jesus and Paul and Drummond had enemies. To *be* an enemy to another man is pagan; but to *have* enemies may be Christian. We are not responsible for our *enemies* but for our *enmities.* In regard to enmities Jesus gives specific teaching (Matt. 5 [23, 24], Matt. 18 [15-17]; Luke 12 [58]). As regards enemies he teaches us to expect and rejoice in them (Matt. 5 [12]). A servant is not greater than his lord. "If they persecuted me they will also persecute you."

Every profession today needs its heroes and martyrs—the teacher who will battle for a truth against adverse public opinion and who will give of his own soul experience to his

pupils; the doctor who will stand against illegal practices; the lawyer who refuses to distort truths to win his case; the merchant who will not drive a sharp bargain; the statesman who will fight against corruption. It is easy enough to make a feeble protest for the right and then subside. That is the coward's method. The hero "resists unto blood—striving against sin." Only one impetus will ever inspire a man to do this for more than a short time. It is the sure conviction that he is a soldier on duty and has received an order from his commander which he cannot and will not disobey because he is an enlisted man.

Study X. The Necessity for Absolute Surrender of Self

SIXTH DAY

Enlist without Reservation or Condition and Await Orders. God a Commander in Whom His Followers can Trust

I Thess. 5 [24]; I Cor. 1 [9], 9 [24-27]; Rom. 4 [21], 8 [28], 12 [1-12]; II Tim. 1 [7, 12], 2 [4, 13]; Mark 10 [29, 30]; Matt. 6 [33].

Luke 14 [26, 27, 33]; Acts 5 [29]; James 5 [11]; I John 5 [3].

"I dare not enlist because I am afraid that, although the chances are overwhelmingly against it, I still might be one out of the one tenth whom God will fix upon for some supreme sacrifice." This is the secret thought of many a timid heart, as this great question of surrender is faced. What shall we reply? Shall those of us who have found our places in the firing line taunt with cowardice the faltering recruits? Never! Such a thought is absolutely natural and all of us if we are honest with ourselves have had just the same. It came to Jesus in Gethsemane, "O my Father, if it be possible let this cup pass from me," and it is the lot of every Christian to have those things happen to him which happened to our Lord Jesus Christ.

We will simply call attention to two facts. (1) God will never force you to make the supreme sacrifice unless you are perfectly willing to do it; in other words, even after you have enlisted he never forces you by driving. He does not come into the army and order a certain company to march to certain death with death penalty for hesitation, while he stays behind and watches the manœuvre; but he comes and says as it were, "Those of the army who will follow me on this dangerous undertaking step forward three paces from the ranks." In Jesus' army the ultra-dangerous work is always done by the freewill volunteers and our Leader is always one of the company; and the marvel of it is—a thing which Napoleon could not understand—he always has men enough for his work and to spare.

(2) God is a loving Father and he will not call upon you

to make unnecessary sacrifices. It pains him more to see his children in suffering than it does them to experience it. He is a commander in whom his followers may trust. Do not fear to enlist without reservation or conditions and await orders. What those specific orders for each individual are and how one may learn them with exactness is the subject of the next nine studies.

"When God puts down his great will beside me telling me to do it, he puts down just beside it as great a thing, his love. And as my soul trembles at the fearfulness of will, love comes with its calm omnipotence and draws it to himself; then takes my timid will and twines it around his, till mine is fierce with passion to serve, and strong to do his will. Just as if some mighty task were laid to an infant's hand and the engine-grasp of a giant strengthened it with his own. Where God's law is, is God's love. Look at law—it withers your very soul with its stern inexorable face. But look at love or look at God's will, which means look at love's will, and you are reassured and your heart grows strong."

DRUMMOND: *The Ideal Life, page 375.*

Study X. The Necessity for Absolute Surrender of Self

SEVENTH DAY—REVIEW

1. Does God always want a man to go where the need is greatest?

2. Cite instances of men who have taken up what they supposed to be disagreeable tasks and afterwards found the greatest joy in them.

3. Cite instances of the reverse—supposed agreeable tasks turning out to be delusions.

4. Can a life lived in accordance with God's will ever be a failure? (See *W. W. Story,* Poems, Vol. II., page 177, "Io Victis.")

5. Is a life in which all but one thing is surrendered a Christian life? Can it ever be a happy life? (Mark 10^{22}.)

6. Is the old idea that each son should follow his father's trade possible under the Christian dispensation? Is this the reason why the Jewish religion of the Old Testament was never a missionary religion?

7. Why should any man be afraid to face the missionary question or to listen to missionary addresses?

8. Can a man near middle life, who becomes convinced that he entered his profession when God was calling him to some other, get a new grip on his work, and, indeed, turn it into a divine calling? (I Cor. $7^{20\text{-}24}$.)

We have now reached a point in our studies which is, in a very true sense, a parting of the ways. Hitherto the truths which we have examined have been simple intellectual propositions—a statement of the Christian conception of God's plan for the world and for the individual, and of the sort of decision which God requires of his followers. The remaining studies—on the Finding Out of God's Will by each individual and on the Issues of Obedience—concern truths which must primarily be spiritually apprehended by the will, not accepted merely as intellectual propositions by the mind. He who, at this point, before entering upon the further studies will dedicate his life absolutely and unreservedly to God—and mean it—to do God's will promptly and without conditions, no matter where it may lead, as soon as it shall be clearly revealed, shall know of the teaching that follows—at least of the Scripture passages—whether it be of God or whether the various teachers speak of themselves. He who continues the studies without this decision may find some things that are interesting, even convincing, but the subject as a whole will be as much of an enigma to him as before. It will have no part in his life and he will not know.

Study your answer to the request for decision on the preceding page in the light of the following paragraph:

"In nearly all the important transactions of life, indeed in all transactions which have relation to the future, we have to take a leap into the dark. If we waver . . . . that too is a choice . . . . we stand on a mountain pass in the midst of whirling snow and blinding mist, through which we get glimpses now and then of paths which may be deceptive. If we stand still we shall be frozen to death. If we take the wrong road, we shall be dashed to pieces. We do not certainly know whether there is any right one. What must we do? 'Be strong and of a good courage.' Act for the best, hope for the best, and take what comes. Above all, let us dream no dreams, and tell no lies, but go our way, wherever it may lead, with our eyes open and our heads erect. If death ends all, we cannot meet it better. If not let us enter whatever may be the next scene like honest men with no sophistry in our mouths, and no masks on our faces."

STEPHEN: *Liberty, Equality, Fraternity (1882), pages 331, 333. (Quoted in* JAMES: *The Will to Believe, page 31.)*

C. THE FINDING OUT OF GOD'S WILL

Study XI. Willingness to Do God's Will the Necessary Condition for Knowledge of It.

Study XII. The Universal Will of God for All Men.

Study XIII. The Particular Will of God for Each Individual Man.

Study XIV. How to Find Out the Particular Will of God. (a) The Views of Modern Religious Leaders.

Study XV. How to Find Out the Particular Will of God (concluded). (b) The Fourfold Touchstone of Jesus and the Apostles.

Study XVI. The Fourfold Touchstone. (a) The First Test—Purity.

Study XVII. The Fourfold Touchstone (continued). (b) The Second Test—Honesty.

Study XVIII. The Fourfold Touchstone (continued). (c) The Third Test—Unselfishness.

Study XIX. The Fourfold Touchstone (concluded). (d) The Fourth Test—Love.

STUDY XI

Willingness to Do God's Will the Necessary Condition for Knowledge of It

"If any man willeth to do his will, he shall know of the teaching, whether it is of God, or whether I speak of myself." —*John 7:17.*

"Why do ye not understand my speech? Even because ye cannot hear my word." —*John 8:43.*

"And none of the wicked shall understand: but they that are wise shall understand." —*Daniel 12:10.*

"Now the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; and he cannot know them, because they are spiritually judged. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, and he himself is judged of no man." —*I Cor. 2:14,15.*

"For I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to withstand or to gainsay."—*Luke 21:15.*

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Study XI. Willingness to Do God's Will the Necessary Condition for Knowledge of It

FIRST DAY

God's Will may be Known, not only for the Rare Great Occasions, but for the Ordinary Circumstances of Life

I Cor. 4 [19]; Acts 2 [28], 18 [21], 22 [14]; James 4 [15]; Heb. 13 [21]; John 8 [29].

"There is a will for *where*—in what place, viz. in this town or another town—I am to become like God as well as *that* I am to become like God. There is a will for where I am to be and what I am to be and what I am to do tomorrow. There is a will for what scheme I am to take up, and what work I am to do for Christ, and what business arrangements to make and what money to give away. This is God's private will for me, for every step I take, for the path of life along which he points my way; God's will for my *career*. . . . . Every day, indeed, and many times a day the question rises in a hundred practical forms, 'What is the will of God for me?' What is the will of God for me today, just now, for the next step, for this arrangement and for that, and this amusement, and this projected work for Christ? For all these he [the Christian] feels that he must consult the will of God; and that God has a will for him in all such things, and that it must be possible somehow to know what that will is, is not only a matter of hope but a point in his doctrine and creed."

DRUMMOND: *The Ideal Life, pages 304, 308.*

Study XI. Willingness to Do God's Will the Necessary Condition for Knowledge of It

SECOND DAY

God's Will is not a Mysterious and Obscure Thing Impossible to Comprehend. Any Man may Find it out and Furthermore, We are All Bidden to do so

[Ps. 25 [9]]; Rom. 12 [2]; Col. 1 [9]; Eph. 1 [9], 5 [17].
Matt. 6 [10], 11 [25, 26]; John 7 [17].

"You have thought about the will of God and read and thought, and thought and read, and you have come to this conclusion that the will of God is a very mysterious thing . . . . which some people *may* have revealed to them but does not seem in any way possible to you. . . . . One or two special occasions, indeed, you recall, when you thought you were near the will of God, but they must have been special interpositions on God's part. He does not show his will every day like that; once or twice only in a lifetime, that is as much of this high experience as one ever dare expect.

"Now of course . . . . it is clearly no use going on to find out what God's will is if the thing is impossible. If this experience is correct and we cannot know God's will for the mystery of it, we may as well give up the ideal life at once. But if you examined this experience even cursorily, you would find how far away from the point it was. . . . . It is something worse than unreasonable . . . . to say that we think it hopeless even to know God's will. On the contrary, indeed, there is a strong presumption that we should find it out. [Jesus says *"any man"* may know (John 7 [17]). Paul says we *must* find it out; it is our duty (Eph. 5 [17]).] For if it is so important a thing that the very end of life is involved in it, it would be absurd to imagine that God should keep us even the least in the dark as to what his will may mean. And this presumption is changed into a certainty when we balance our minds . . . . on the terms of this text, 'The God of our fathers

hath chosen thee that thou shouldest know his will.' It is not simply a matter of presumption, it is a matter of *election.* . . . . We are called to know his will.

"How are you to know this secret will of God? It is a great question. We cannot touch it now. Let this suffice. It can be known. It can be known to you. The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord. 'I will guide thee with mine eye.' Unto the upright in heart he shall cause light to arise in darkness. This is not mysticism, no visionary's dream. It is not to drown the reason with enthusiasm's airy hope or supersede the word of God with fanaticism's blind caprice. No, it is not there. It is what Christ said, 'The sheep hear his voice, and he calleth his own sheep by name and leadeth them.' "

DRUMMOND: *Ibid., pages 264-266, 282.*

Study XI. Willingness to Do God's Will the Necessary Condition for Knowledge of It

THIRD DAY

The Failure to Understand God's Will due to the Employment of Wrong, or at Best Only the Secondary and Contributory, Instruments of Spiritual Apprehension

I Cor. 1 [18-31], 2 [1-16]; II Cor. 4 [3-6]; John 8 [43]; I John 4 [5, 6].

"Jews ask for signs [appeal to the *emotions*] and Greeks seek after wisdom [appeal to the *intellect*] but we preach Christ crucified [appeal to the *will*], unto Jews a stumbling-block and unto the Gentiles foolishness, but unto them that are *called,* both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God." (I Cor. 1 [22-24].)

I. *There are many instruments for finding out God's will.* "It may simply be affirmed that there are a number of instruments for finding out God's will. One of them [the human will] is a very great instrument, so far surpassing all the rest in accuracy that there may be said to be but one which has never been known to fail."

II. *The secondary or contributory instruments which often fail.*

"The others are smaller and clumsier, much less delicate indeed, and often fail. They often fail to come within sight of the will of God at all, and are so far astray at other times as to mistake some other thing for it. Still they are instruments, and notwithstanding their defects have a value by themselves, and when the greater instrument employs their humbler powers to second its attempts, they immediately become as keen and unerring as itself."

(a) *Reason.* "God is taking your life and character through a certain process, for example. He is running your career along a certain chain of events. . . . . It is God's will for you to use this thought and to elevate it through regions of consecration into faith."

(b) *Experience.* "There are many paths in life which

we all tread more than once. God's light was by us when we walked there first. . . . . But the next time . . . . he knew the side lights should be burning still and let us walk alone."

(c) *Circumstance.* "God closes things around us till our alternatives are all reduced to one. That one, if we must act, is probably the will of God just then."

(d) *Advice of others.* Take the advice of others freely—the advice of a non-Christian may have God's leading in it; but never regard such advice as final. Jesus often disregarded the advice of others.

(e) *Welfare of others.* As a general thing we should guide our conduct by its effect on "the other fellow" but not always. Jesus often disregarded the apparent welfare of others.

(f) *Example to others.* Generally a safe guide but not always. Jesus often disregarded the effect of his example on others.

These secondary instruments "if not strong enough always to discover what God's will is, are not too feeble oftentimes to determine what it is not" *but not always.*

DRUMMOND: *The Ideal Life, pages 308, 309.*

Astronomy is one of the most daring sciences which the human mind has ever formulated. But it must never be forgotten that without another organ—that of sight—it would never have been possible. Had mankind been born blind we should never have had astronomy, and anyone who had suggested such an idea would probably have been laughed to scorn. But once granted the primary organ of sight, the secondary organ of reason has been able to build up the whole marvelous system.

Once granted the primary organ of spiritual apprehension, by which he saw God, Paul was able to reason out with his secondary instrument the grandest system of theology which the world has seen. But the latter organ, as in the case of astronomy, was helpless without the former.

Study XI. Willingness to Do God's Will the Necessary Condition for Knowledge of It

FOURTH DAY

The Limits of Criticism and Reasoning Processes as Instruments of Spiritual Apprehension

Acts 18 [24-28].

"The geometer might as well expect to solve his problems by the function of smell as a responsible soul to find God by the understanding."

BUSHNELL: *The New Life, page 182.*

See PHILLIPS BROOKS: *The Candle of the Lord.* HUGH BLACK: *"The Paralysis of Criticism," Outlook, March 17, 1906.*

If the mind were the final means of apprehending God we should be reduced at once to the position of Cicero with reference to the Roman religion—that only the intellectually gifted can be saved. Inasmuch as intellectual brilliance is largely a matter of education or inheritance, and this in turn is often a matter of chance, such an ordering of the world would involve great injustice. In the passage quoted above from Acts the case of Apollos shows clearly that spiritual apprehension cannot depend upon intellect alone. It also demonstrates the limits of a brilliant intellect until steered by a consecrated will. Intellect alone was able to make small progress. But the combination of consecration plus intellect was invincible.

Study XI. Willingness to Do God's Will the Necessary Condition for Knowledge of It

FIFTH DAY

The Human Will the Organ of Spiritual Knowledge

John 7 [17].

"The one great instrument which uses them [the secondary instruments] in turn . . . . and which supplements their discoveries or even supplants them if it choose by its own superior light and might and right . . . . is obedience. Obedience, as it is sometimes expressed, is the organ of spiritual knowledge. As the eye is the organ of physical sight; the mind of intellectual sight; so the organ of spiritual vision is this strange power obedience."

DRUMMOND: *The Ideal Life, page 310.*

Robertson was the first to apprehend this truth in modern times, and he coined the phrase, *"Obedience the Organ of Spiritual Knowledge."* Drummond was keen enough to see that Jesus did not say this and that there is a contradiction in Robertson's expression. He wrote:—

"It appears almost as if a contradiction were involved. To *know* God's will is as much as to say *do* God's will. But how are we to *do* God's will *until* we know it? To know it, that is the very dilemma we are in. And it seems no way out of it to say, *Do* it and you shall know it. We want to know it in order to do it and now we are told to do it in order to know it."

DRUMMOND: *Ibid., pages 312, 313.*

Drummond pointed out that Jesus did not say if any man *do* he shall *know*—this would lead to blind fanaticism, going ahead without orders—but if any man be *willing* to do he shall know.

"The being willing comes first, and then the knowing; and thereafter the doing may follow: the doing, that is to say, if the will has been made sufficiently clear to proceed."

DRUMMOND: *Ibid., page 313.*

We therefore revise Robertson's statement to read—

Willingness to Do God's Will the Necessary Condition for Knowledge of It.

Just as a man who will not open or yield his eyes to a beautiful picture, will not see; just as a man who will not open or yield his mind to a thought, will not understand; so a man who will not open or yield his will to God's will, will not know, or see spiritually. The completely surrendered or open human will is the means of highest knowledge.

"To be willing is a rarer grace than to be doing the will of God. For he who is willing may sometimes have nothing to do, and must only be willing to wait; and it is easier to be doing God's will than to be willing to have nothing to do—it is easier far to be working for Christ than it is to be willing to cease. No, there is nothing rarer in the world today than the truly willing soul, and there is nothing more worth coveting than the will to do God's will. There is no grander possession for any Christian life than the transparently simple mechanism of a sincerely obeying heart."

DRUMMOND: *Ibid., page 319.*

Study XI. Willingness to Do God's Will the Necessary Condition for Knowledge of It

SIXTH DAY

"He That is Willing Shall Know"

A practical case to illustrate. The German law requires that every foreigner entering a city must be announced to the city police by his landlord within six days after arriving. The landlord alone is responsible for this announcing and if he neglects to do it he is heavily fined. Suppose the foreigner stays four weeks and when he is ready to go the landlord comes and privately says to him: "When you come to the next city don't say that you spent four weeks here; just say that you have been traveling all the time. I neglected to announce you. I saved fifty cents for myself by so doing. If you let it be known I shall be heavily fined."

The foreigner is in a decidedly embarrassing position. Shall he not lie to save his friend? How shall he know God's will? Suppose he consults the secondary instruments.

Reason says, Go ahead and deceive—don't make so much fuss over a little matter.

Experience says, It is better not to get mixed up in a foreign police case.

Circumstance says, It is the only way out of the hole, you must lie.

Advice of others says, Lie every time, we do it regularly.

Welfare of others says, You have no right to involve this landlord who has done so much to make it comfortable for you. It is a case of conflict of duties and the highest love requires that you lie.

Example to others says, You don't want to get the reputation of selfishly sticking to a principle to save your own little mean soul when the financial welfare of another man is concerned.

The Christian, however, is not satisfied with any one of these. By himself alone he decides: "I will tell the exact truth if asked, no matter what the result is. Truth I know to be

God's will. If my friend gets fined I will pay his fine for him." Unselfishness is God's will. In other words he *"is willing"* to make any sacrifice personal or otherwise for God's will. When he has made this decision he goes forward in perfect peace; and before long God reveals some way out of the difficulty which he recognizes as the perfectly right one. And he *"knows."*

"Let us but get our hearts in position for knowing the will of God—only let us be willing to know God's will in our hearts that we may do God's will in our lives, and we shall raise no question as to how this will may come, and feel no fears in case the heavenly light should go."

DRUMMOND: *Ibid., page 319.*

"Who of us has not bowed his will to some supreme law, accepted some obedience as the atmosphere in which his life must live, and found at once that his mind's darkness turned to light and that many a hard question found its answer."

BROOKS: *The Influence of Jesus, page 231.*

Study XI. Willingness to Do God's Will the Necessary Condition for Knowledge of It

SEVENTH DAY—REVIEW

1. Is it true that if *any* man be willing he shall know? How much intellect is necessary to grasp spiritual truth?

2. Where does Jesus teach that God takes an interest in even the smallest details of our life?

3. Why is the impression prevalent that God's will is a mystery?

4. In how far are reason, experience and circumstance safe guides to a knowledge of God's will? Are we sometimes called upon to do the irrational thing? the seemingly irrational thing? an entirely new and untried thing?

5. When all alternatives seem to be reduced to one, is that one surely God's will? May there still be others?

6. When did Jesus disregard the advice of others?

7. When did Jesus disregard the apparent welfare of others?

8. When did Jesus disregard his example to others?

9. Were the lonely nights which Jesus spent in the mountains times when he was getting himself ready to obey?

10. Does willingness always require immediate action? (Does enlisting necessarily presuppose immediate fighting?)

TO FIND OUT GOD'S WILL

1. Pray.

2. Think.

3. Talk to wise people, but do not regard their decision as final.

4. Beware of the bias of your own will but do not be *too much* afraid of it (God never unnecessarily thwarts a man's nature and likings, and it is a mistake to think that his will is in the line of the disagreeable).

5. Meanwhile do the next thing (for doing God's will in small things is the best preparation for knowing it in great things).

6. When decision and action are necessary, go ahead.

7. Never reconsider the decision when it is finally acted upon; and

8. You will probably not find out till afterwards, perhaps long afterwards, that you have been led at all.

SMITH: *The Life of Henry Drummond, pages 127, 128.*

STUDY XII

The Universal Will of God for All Men. "God's Will for the World —for Character"

"Ye therefore shall be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect." —*Matt. 5:48.*

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with every spiritual blessing . . . . making known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he purposed in him unto a dispensation of the fulness of the times, to sum up all things in Christ." —*Eph. 1:3,9,10.*

"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth are passed away; and the sea is no more. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of the throne saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he shall dwell with them, and they shall be his peoples, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God; and he shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and death shall be no more; neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain, any more: the first things are passed away. And he that sitteth on the throne said, Behold, I make all things new." —*Rev. 21:1-5.*

"For the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit." —*Rom. 14:17.*

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Study XII. The Universal Will of God for All Men

FIRST DAY

The Universal and the Particular Will of God

Universal. Acts 17 [24-27]; Isaiah 44 [24-28].
Particular. Acts 22 [10-14], 13 [22].

"There is a part of God's will which everyone may know [so far as it has been revealed]—*a universal part;* [there is also] a part no one knows but you—*a particular part.* A universal part for everyone: A particular part for the individual. . . . . There is God's will for the world and God's will for the individual. There is God's will written on tables of stone for all the world to read. There is God's will carved in sacred hieroglyphic which no one reads but you. There is God's will rolling in thunder over the life of universal man. There is God's will dropped softly on the believer's ear in angel whispers or the still small voice of God."

DRUMMOND: *The Ideal Life, pages 268, 278.*

Study XII. The Universal Will of God for All Men

SECOND DAY

The Entire Universal Will of God for the World Cannot as yet be Fully Known, Since, in the Process of Evolution, it has not yet been Fully Disclosed. We may only Know that Part of it Which has been Revealed in Nature and through History up to the Present Day

I Cor. 13 [12]; Phil. 3 [12]; Matt. 13 [17]; I John 3 [2].

"Through the ages one increasing purpose runs."

TENNYSON: *Locksley Hall.*

"In one sense, of course, no man can know the will of God, even as in one sense no man can know God himself. God's will is a great and infinite mystery—a thing of mighty mass and volume, which can no more be measured out to hungry souls in human sentences than the eternal knowledge of God or the boundless love of Christ."

DRUMMOND: *Ibid., page 267.*

Study XII. The Universal Will of God for All Men

THIRD DAY

God's Revelation of His Universal Will for the World in Nature. "The Physical Contents of God's Will"

Matt. 6 [28].

"There is a part of God's will which every one may know. It is written in divine characters in two sacred books, which every man may read. The one of them is the Bible, the other is Nature. The Bible is God's will in words, in formal thoughts, in grace. Nature is God's will in matter and tissue and force. Nature is not often considered a part of God's will, but it is a part, and a great part, and the first part. And perhaps one reason why some never know the second is because they yield no full obedience to the first. God's law of progress is from the lower to the higher; and scant obedience at the beginning of his will means disobedience with the rest. The laws of nature are the will of God for our bodies. As there is a will of God for our higher nature—the moral laws—as emphatically is there a will of God for the lower—the natural laws. If you would know God's will in the higher, therefore, you must begin with God's will in the lower, which simply means this—that if you want to live the ideal life you must begin with the ideal body. The law of moderation, the law of sleep, the law of regularity, the law of exercise, the law of cleanliness—this is the law or will of God for you. This is the first law, the beginning of his will for you. And if we are ambitious to get on to do God's will in the higher reaches, let us respect it as much in the lower; for there may be as much of God's will in minor things, as much of God's will in taking good bread and pure water, as in keeping good conscience or living a pure life. Who ever heard of gluttony doing God's will, or laziness, or uncleanness, or the man who was careless and wanton of natural life? Let a man disobey God in these, and you have no certainty that he has any true principle for

obeying God in anything else: for God's will does not only run into the church and the prayer meeting and the higher chambers of the soul, but into the common rooms at home down to the wardrobe and larder and cellar, and into the bodily frame down to blood and muscle and brain."

Ibid., pages 268, 269.

Study XII. The Universal Will of God for All Men

FOURTH DAY

God's Revelation of His Universal Will for the World in Jesus, the Living Word, and in the Bible, the Written Word. "The Moral Contents of God's Will"

Matt. 5 [17-20]; Heb. 1 [1, 2]; John 1 [14], 14 [15, 21-24].

"From the moral side there are three different departments of God's will. Foremost, and apparently most rigid of all, are the Ten Commandments. Now the Ten Commandments contain in a few sentences one of the largest known portions of God's will. They form the most strict code of morality in the world; the basis of all others; the most venerable and universal expression of the will of God for man. Following upon this there come the Beatitudes of Christ. This is another large portion of God's will. This forms the most unique code of morality in the world, the most complete and lovely additional expression of the will of God for Christians. Passing through the human heart of Christ, the older commandment of the Creator becomes the soft and mellow beatitude of the Saviour—passes from the colder domain of law, with a penalty on failure, to the warm region of love, with a benediction on success. These are the two chief elements in the moral part of the will of God for man. But there is a third set of laws and rules which are not to be found exactly expressed in either of these. The Ten Commandments and the Beatitudes take up most of the room in God's will, but there are shades of precept still unexpressed which also have their place. Hence we must add to all this mass of law and beatitude many more laws and many more beatitudes which lie enclosed in other texts, and other words of Christ which have their place like the rest as portions of God's will." *Ibid., pages 270, 271.*

Cf. Gal. 5 [22]; I Cor. 13 [4-7]; Col. 3 [12-17]; Eph. 6 [13-18]; Phil. 4 [8]; I Tim. 6 [11]; James 3 [17]; II Peter 1 [5-7] for other like collections of beatitudes.

Study XII. The Universal Will of God for All Men

FIFTH DAY

Can We ever Hope to Fulfil All These Laws?

Gal. 5 [14]; I Cor. 16 [14]; Rom. 10 [3-10], 13 [8-10]; Phil. 3 [9]; Matt. 7 [12], 22 [34-40].

James 2 [8]; John 13 [34]; I John 5 [3].

"How can we do God's will?—this complicated mass of rules and statutes, each bristling with the certainty of a thousand breakages. . . . . Can God know how weak we are, and blind and biased toward the breakages, ere ever we thought of him? Can he think how impossible it is to keep these laws, even for one close-watched, experimental hour? Did Christ really mean it—not some lesser thing than this—when he taught in the ideal prayer that God's will was to be done on earth even as it is done in heaven?

"There can be but one answer. 'God hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know his will.' . . . . There by the side of our frailty, he lays down his holy will—lays it down confidingly as if a child could take it in its grasp, and, as if he means the child to fondle it and bear it in his breast, he says, 'If a man love me he will keep my words.' "

Ibid., pages 272, 273.

"When God puts down his great will beside me telling me to do it, he puts down just beside it as great a thing, his love. And as my soul trembles at the fearfulness of will, love comes with its calm omnipotence and draws it to himself; then takes my timid will and twines it around his, till mine is fierce with passion to serve, and strong to do his will. Just as if some mighty task were laid to an infant's hand and the engine-grasp of a giant strengthened it with his own. Where God's law is, is God's love. Look at law—it withers your very soul with its stern inexorable face. But look at love or look at God's will, which means look at love's will, and you are reassured and your heart grows strong. . . . . So the Christian keeps that will or the laws of God because of the love of God."

Ibid., pages 274, 275, 277.

Study XII. The Universal Will of God for All Men

SIXTH DAY

Although God's Universal Will for the World—His Will for Character —Cannot Be Fully Known; His Particular Will for Each Individual —His Will for Career—may be Fully Known by that Individual, and it is This Which We are Bidden to Know and Do

Rom. 12 [2]; Eph. 5 [17].

"In the Ten Commandments, in conscience, in the Beatitudes of Christ, God tells all the world his will. . . . . It is as universal as his love. It is the will on which the character of every man is to be formed and conformed to God's. . . . . But there is a will for *career* as well as for character. . . . . If I have God's will in my character, my life may become great and good. It may be useful and honorable and even a monument of the sanctifying power of God. But it will only be a life. However great and pure it is, it can be no more than a life. And it ought to be a mission. There should be no such thing as a Christian life, each life should be a mission.

"Now those . . . . who are simply living in the world and growing character, however finely they may be developing their character, cannot understand too plainly that they are not fulfilling God's will. They are really outside a great part of God's will altogether. They understand the universal part, they are moulded by it, and their lives as lives are in some sense noble and true. But they miss the private part, the secret whispering of God in the ear, the constant message from earth to heaven, 'Lord, what will thou have me to do?'"

Ibid., page 306.

Study XII. The Universal Will of God for All Men

SEVENTH DAY—REVIEW

1. Have we received the highest revelation of character which it is possible for God to give?

2. Is it possible for a man to know God's will for career without knowing his will for character?

3. Has a Christian the right to transgress deliberately the laws of health?

4. Did Jesus ever do so?

5. How far can we learn God's universal will from the ancient classics? from modern literature? from secular biography and autobiography? from history? from tradition? from public opinion? from natural science?

6. Is a man who has lived up to God's universal will for character as far as it has been revealed a perfect man? Is he a blameless man?

7. Is any other instrument than the intellect necessary to grasp the universal will of God for the world? (Cf. James 2 [19, 20].)

8. Is it possible for a man to do the broad, universal will of God for all men but not the particular for himself?

9. Is the soul struggle and the definite conscious act of ethical decision necessary to know and do the universal will of God? (Luke 9 [49, 50]; Matt. 10 [40-42], 25 [37-40].)

10. Is this struggle necessary to know and do the particular will? (Luke 11 [23]; John 8 [43, 47]; John 5 [30]; Matt. 19 [16-22], 7 [22, 23].)

11. Which is referred to in Matt. 7 [21]—the universal or the particular? Does the universal include the particular?

12. Can a person do God's universal will by imitating another person who is doing God's will? (1 Cor. 4 [16], 11 [1]; Phil. 3 [17], 4 [9]; I Peter 5 [3].) by imitating God? (Eph. 5 [1].)

13. Can he do the particular will of God for himself in that same way? (John 21 [21, 22].)

STUDY XIII

The Particular Will of God for Each Individual Man. "God's Will for the Individual—for Career"

"I will guide thee with mine eye." —*Ps. 32:8.*

"The sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out." —*John 10:3.*

"The God of our fathers hath appointed thee to know his will." —*Acts 22:14.*

"A man after my heart, who shall do *all* my will." —*Acts 13:22.*

"But I will come to you shortly, if the Lord will."—*I Cor. 4:19.*

"Come now, ye that say, Today or tomorrow we will go into this city, and spend a year there, and trade, and get gain: whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. . . . . For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall both live, and do this or that." —*James 4:13,15.*

"And a voice came out of heaven, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased." —*Luke 3:22.*

"And behold, angels came and ministered unto him." —*Matt. 4:11.*

"And behold, a voice out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." —*Matt. 17:5.*

"And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou heardest me." —*John 11:41.*

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Study XIII. The Particular Will of God for Each Individual Man

FIRST DAY

What Do We Mean by the Particular Will of God for the Individual Man?

Acts 22 [3-21] (esp. vs. 14, 17, 18, 21).

"It is a reasonable expectation that we may find it [God's will] so fully as to know at any moment whether we be in the line of it or no; and when difficulty arises about the next step of our life, we may have absolute certainty which way God's will inclines."

DRUMMOND: *The Ideal Life, pages 266, 267.*

"There is an unknown part of God's will—at least, a part which is known only to *you*. There is God's will for the world and God's will for the individual. There is God's will written on tables of stone for all the world to read. There is God's will carved in sacred hieroglyphic which no one reads but you. There is God's will rolling in thunder over the life of universal man. There is God's will dropped softly on the believer's ear in angel whispers, or the still small voice of God."

Ibid., page 278.

"Now this region may be distinguished from the other regions . . . . by its secrecy. It is a private thing, between God and you. You want to know what to do next—your calling in life, for instance. You want to know what action to take in a certain matter. You want to know what to do with your money. You want to know whether to go into a certain scheme or not. Then you enter into this private chamber of God's will, and ask this private question, 'Lord, what wouldest thou have *me* to do?' "

Ibid., pages 278, 279.

"There is a will for career as well as for character. There is a will for *where*—in what place, viz. in this town or another

town—I am to become like God as well as *that* I am to become like God. There is a will for where I am to be, and what I am to be, and what I am to do tomorrow. There is a will for what scheme I am to take up, and what work I am to do for Christ, and what business arrangements to make, and what money to give away. This is God's private will for me, for every step I take, for the path of life along which he points my way: God's will for my *career.*" *Ibid., page 304.*

"There is a will of God for me which is willed for no one else besides. It is not a share in the universal will in the same sense as I have a share in the universal love. It is a particular will for me, different from the will he has for anyone else—a private will—a will which no one else knows about—which no one can know about but me."

Ibid., pages 303, 304.

"The secret joy of asking a question like this ['Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?'], the wonderful sense in asking it of being in the counsels of God, the overpowering thought that God has taken notice of you, and your question—that he will let you do something, something peculiar, personal, private, which no one else has been given to do—this which gives life for God its true sublimity, and makes a perpetual sacrament of all its common things."

Ibid., page 306.

Study XIII. The Particular Will of God for Each Individual Man

SECOND DAY

Does God Actually Communicate With Men to Energize and Guide Them?

Gal. 1 [12], 2 [2] (Acts 15 [2]); I Cor. 15 [8]; II Cor. 12 [1-10]; Eph. 3 [1-3].

Matt. 3 [13-17], 4 [10, 11], 16 [13-17], 16 [21]—17 [8], 26 [36-46], 27 [46].

Acts 8 [26].

Acts 9 [1-19] (cf. 22 [3-21], 26 [2-19]; I Cor. 15 [8]), 10 [9-16], 12 [7], 16 [6-10], 18 [20, 21], 19 [21], 20 [22, 23], 27 [21-25].

John 10 [3, 4], 14 [16, 26], 15 [26], 16 [7, 13, 14]; I John 3 [24].

"This is a distinct addition to the other parts—an addition, too, which many men ignore and other men deny. But there is such a region in God's will—a region unmapped in human charts, unknown to human books, a region for the pure in heart, for the upright, for the true. It is a land of mystery to those who know it not, a land of foolishness and weaknesses, and delusive sights and sounds. But there is a land where the Spirit moves, a luminous land, a walking in God's light. There is a region where God's own people have their breathing from above, where each saint's steps are ordered of the Lord." *Ibid., page 278.*

Of the fact of some sort of communication between God and man there cannot be the slightest doubt. The verses cited above are sufficient in number to establish the fact with reference to Jesus and the Apostles. That many men have never had such intercourse is no argument against the possibility of it unless it can be shown that these men have fulfilled the conditions under which, according to Jesus and Paul, such communication is possible, and that then there has been no intercourse. What are these conditions and how are we to expect the messages of God to come to us?

Study XIII. The Particular Will of God for Each Individual Man

THIRD DAY

The Human Will the Receiving Instrument of Divine Communication

John 7 [17].

"The model life is not to be mystically attained. There is spirituality about it but no unreality." *Ibid., page 231.*

"This is not mysticism, no visionary's dream. It is not to drown the reason with enthusiasm's airy hope or supersede the word of God with fanaticism's blind caprice. No, it is not that. It is what Christ said: 'The sheep hear his voice, and he calleth his own sheep by name and leadeth them.'" *Ibid., page 277.*

Man learns God's will, not primarily through the five physical senses and the mind, but through the organ of spiritual apprehension, the human will. It is with reference to this point that many men go astray at the very start. The people of earlier and more primitive ages expressed their experience when God communicated with them in the only terms which they had—the terms of human communication—vision and the voice. Their experience was real but they could only imperfectly express it, and they needed to express impelling conviction in some such way that it would not be confused with an ordinary thought or idea. It is significant that when God communicates with man in these Gospel records his words are generally either a conviction of sin, a command to service, or an assurance, i.e. *an irresistible conviction,* impelling and energizing a man either to go ahead or to stop short.

It is in the realm of the will, then, that God communicates with men, even as Jesus said: "If any man be *willing,* he shall know." We are to expect no hand reaching down from heaven, no human voice—only the unmistakable, irresistible conviction energizing the human will.

Study XIII. The Particular Will of God for Each Individual Man

FOURTH DAY

The Significance of the Compelling Conviction

Rom. 9 [1]; Matt. 16 [17]; James 3 [17]; 1 John 4 [1, 13]; Rev. 17 [17]; II Peter 1 [21].

How are we to explain the sense of mission in all the great leaders of the world's civilization—their irresistible conviction that they were in the right and their instant willingness to die for such convictions? Napoleon had no such conviction about his work—he did not die on the field of Waterloo but fled from it, and it is just this lack of "mission" in his career that has caused him to be denied a place among the leaders of the world's civilization. But Socrates, Joan of Arc, Abraham Lincoln had this very thing. Socrates has left on record the description of his "Dæmonium"—the inward impulse which ever impelled him to go ahead. For Jesus and Paul this same phenomenon expresses itself in the ever recurring phrase, "I must." And the interesting thing to note is that extensive education is not necessary to such a conviction. Any man (John 7 [17]) may have such assurance with reference to his course not only about great things but also about the little things—every step of his life. Any man *may* have this sure conviction, but before he *will,* two things are essential for the most of us—the receiving instrument must be cleaned, and it must be made strong in order most fully to receive the communications.

Study XIII. The Particular Will of God for Each Individual Man

FIFTH DAY

How May We Prepare Ourselves to Receive the Compelling Conviction?

(a) *The cleaning of the receiving instrument—The significance of right living and a clear conscience.*

"Which of you convicteth me of sin?" John 8 [46].

[Prov. 21 [2]]; I Thess. 4 [3-12]; I Cor. 1 [8], 4 [4]; II Tim. 2 [19]. Mark 3 [11]; Matt. 5 [8, 23, 24], 13 [15]; Acts 8 [21], 23 [1], 24 [16]; James 4 [8]; Heb. 9 [9, 14], 10 [22], 13 [18]; I Peter 1 [13-16], 3 [16]; I John 3 [19-24]; II Peter 3 [14].

"Wisdom will not enter into a soul that deviseth evil, nor dwell in a body that is held in pledge by sin."

Wisdom of Solomon 1:4.

"It requires a well-kept life to know the will of God, and none but the Christlike in character can know the Christlike in career."

DRUMMOND: *The Ideal Life, page 307.*

"The practical object of the first process is mainly to put the thing in position where God can use it. . . . . A man is consecrated that God may use him. It is the process by which he is got into position for God." *Ibid., page 285.*

Intercourse of God with man in the Bible is always preceded, either immediately or in the more remote past, by a moral victory. It is the "pure in heart" who see God. Those who have been faithful in that which is least are entrusted with the true riches. He who loses his life in deeds of unselfishness "finds it." Examine all the instances of the communication between God and Jesus in the New Testament and see if Jesus has not won some moral victory just before each instance.

It is here that the universal will of God is connected with the particular. Transgression of the universal will of

God—the laws of nature and morality so far as they have been revealed—is sin and sin blocks the channel of communication. In other words, obedience to the universal will of God is the first step toward knowing the particular will of God.

"Does it seem to you impossible that you can ever find your way into a path prepared for you by God and be led along in it by his mighty counsel? Let me tell you a secret. It requires a very close, well-kept life to do this; a life in which the soul can have confidence always toward God; a life which allows the Spirit always to abide and reign; driven away by no affront of selfishness. There must be a complete renunciation of self-will."

BUSHNELL: *The New Life, pages 26, 27.*

Study XIII. The Particular Will of God for Each Individual Man

SIXTH DAY

How May We Prepare Ourselves to Receive the Compelling Conviction? (concluded)

(b) *The strengthening of the receiving instrument—The training and developing of the human will.*

"I do always the things that are pleasing to him." John 8 [29].

Mark 10 [32-34]; Matt. 21 [28-31]; Luke 9 [51-62], 14 [25-35] (esp. v. 33).

Not only is a clean instrument necessary to receive the divine communication. We must also have a strong instrument. "The real organ of knowing God's will," says Drummond (page 316), "[may be] so out of order from disuse that even reason would be biased in its choice. A heart not quite subdued to God is an imperfect element in which his will can never live; and the intellect which belongs to such a heart is an imperfect instrument and cannot find God's will unerringly —for God's will is found in regions which obedience only can explore."

The human will can be trained and strengthened so that the mind will have greater sensibility in apprehension of conviction. Once granted the foundation of right living and a clear conscience, the delicacy of perception of God's communications is directly proportionate to the development and strength of the human will. God's messages and missions have never been given to weak men. But a word of caution should be inserted here. There is a difference between a strong will (I Cor. 7 [37]) and a stubborn will (Titus 1 [7]). A stubborn will is, in reality, a weak will. A strong will is a will that has been trained to be master of itself by self-denial; and, inasmuch as absolute surrender is the highest form of self-denial (Luke 14 [33]), it follows that absolute surrender is the strongest exercise of which the human will is

capable. This seems like a paradox but it is a fact, and it explains why the apparent weakness and submissiveness of Christianity has produced so many physical and moral heroes.

Are there means for increasing the power of the human will as there are for increasing the power of the human eye and the human mind? There certainly are. Prof. William James in his "Psychology" [Briefer Course], page 149, at the close of the chapter on "Habit" gives a most effective method. "Be ascetically heroic and self-denying about some one little thing each day," he says. Pick out some one thing, some article of diet or habit and deny yourself it *without exception,* not because you need to but because you have once decided to. Jesus himself followed this same method. In certain matters he never allowed an exception: (John 8 [29]) "I do *always* the things that are pleasing to him."

Can we combine the cleaning and strengthening of the human will into one process? Can we set before us some absolute moral standards of right living which we can apply to every question that arises, from which we allow ourselves no right of deviation? and will the practice of this process result in undoubted, compelling convictions from God? In the next lesson we shall give the result of such an attempt on the part of six modern religious leaders; in the lesson after, the teaching of Jesus and the Apostles on the same point.

Study XIII. The Particular Will of God for Each Individual Man

SEVENTH DAY—REVIEW

1. How far can we learn God's particular will for us individually from nature? from the Bible? from the ancient classical writers? from the modern literature? from secular biography and autobiography? from another man? (Phil. 4 [9].)

2. Carlyle says of the religious leader: "It is ever the way with the thinker, the Spiritual Hero. What he says all men were not far from saying, were longing to say." Have you not had this experience—where some great preacher put into words a thought which you had had vaguely in your mind for a long time, but which was not clear enough to be expressed? Why was he able to express it and you were not?

3. Can convictions take on such reality as to be regarded as visions?

4. What assurance have we in Scripture that God cares for the smallest details of our life and career?

5. How distinguish compelling convictions from ordinary impulses? (I John 4 [1]; James 3 [17].)

6. Do doubts have a moral root? If so can they be cured by right action, i.e. by running back to the switch where we ran off the main line of obedience?

"If you have lost the blessing . . . . go back and search for it, and you will find it where you lost it! Just there and nowhere else. Have you found the spot where your obedience failed? Yield and obey just there, pick up your obedience where you dropped it, and there you may obtain the blessing again as you obtained it at the first; but *just there and nowhere else.*"

MacNeil: *The Spirit-Filled Life, page 124.*

STUDY XIV

How to Know the Particular Will of God (a) The Views of Modern Religious Leaders

1. *Horace Bushnell:* "Do the right."
2. *Canon Mozley:* "Love."
3. *F. W. Robertson:* "Be generous, chaste, true, brave."
4. *Henry Drummond:* "Practice I Cor. 13:4-6."
5. *Robert E. Speer:* "Practice John 6:29; I Thess. 4:3; Matt. 18:14."
6. *Lyman Abbott:* "Follow Christ in your life."

Can we combine the cleansing and developing of our instrument for knowing God's will into one process? Can we set before us some absolute moral standards of right living, which we can apply to every question, great or small, that arises, and from which we allow ourselves no right of deviation? And will the practice of this process result in undoubted compelling convictions from God? As the universal will of God passes in review each day before us in the revelations of nature and humanity will he, through the instrumentality of these standards, lay unmistakably upon our hearts those particular phases of this universal will which are his particular will for us?

Let us trace chronologically the history of this attempt in modern times. Six men who no one doubts were led of God have given us, each one, the story of his experience and in nearly every instance the result.

Study XIV. How to Know the Particular Will of God. (a) The Views of Modern Religious Leaders

FIRST DAY

Horace Bushnell—"Do the Right"

"Have I ever consented to be, and am I really now, in the right, as in principle and supreme law; to live for it; to make any sacrifice it will cost me; to believe everything it will bring me to see; to be a confessor of Christ as soon as it appears to be enjoined upon me; to go on a mission to the world's end if due conviction sends me; to change my occupation for good conscience's sake; to repair whatever wrong I have done to another; to be humbled if I should before my worst enemy; to do complete justice to God, and if I could to all worlds—in a word, to be in wholly right intent, and have no mind but this forever?"

CHENEY: *Life and Letters of Horace Bushnell, pages 57, 58.*

Bushnell has left us the story of how he came to accept this standard and what it meant in his later life in a sermon on "Dissolving of Doubts," first delivered to the students of Yale College.

"Suppose that one of us, clear of all the vices, having a naturally active-minded inquiring habit, occupied largely with thoughts of religion; never meaning to get far away from the truth, but, as he thinks, to find it, only resolved to have a free mind, and not allow himself to be carried by force or fear, or anything but real conviction—suppose that such a one, going on thus, year by year, reading, questioning, hearing all the while the gospel in which he has been educated, sometimes impressed by it, but relapsing shortly into greater doubt than before, finds his religious beliefs wearing out and vanishing, he knows not how, till, finally, he seems to really believe nothing. He has not meant to be an atheist; but he is astonished to find that he has nearly lost the conviction of

God, and cannot, if he would, say with any emphasis of conviction that God exists. The world looks blank, and he feels that existence is getting blank also to himself. This heavy charge of his possibly immortal being oppresses him, and he asks again and again, 'What shall I do with it?' His hunger is complete, and his soul turns every way for bread. His friends do not satisfy him. His suns do not rise but only climb. A kind of leaden aspect overhangs the world. Till, finally, pacing his chamber some day, there comes up suddenly the question, 'Is there, then, no truth that I do believe? Yes, there is this one, now that I think of it; there is a distinction of right and wrong that I never doubted, and I see not how I can; I am even quite sure of it.' Then forthwith starts up the question, 'Have I, then, ever taken the principle of right for my life? I have done right things as men speak; have I ever thrown my life out on the principle to become all it requires of me? No, I have not, consciously I have not. Ah! then here is something for me to do! No matter what becomes of my questions—nothing ought to become of them if I cannot take a first principle so inevitably true, and live in it.' The very suggestion seems to be a kind of revelation; it is even a relief to feel the conviction it brings. 'Here then,' he says, 'will I begin. If there is a God, as I rather hope there is, and very dimly believe, he is a right God. If I have lost him in wrong, perhaps I shall find him in right. Will he not help me, or perchance, even be discovered to me?' Now the decisive moment is come. He drops on his knees, and there he prays to the dim God, dimly felt, confessing the dimness for honesty's sake, and asking for help that he may begin a right life. He bows himself on it, as he prays, choosing it to be henceforth his unalterably eternal endeavor.

"It is an awfully dark prayer in the look of it; but the truest and best he can make, the better and the more true that he puts no orthodox colors on it; and the prayer and the vow are so profoundly meant that his soul is borne up into God's help, as it were, by some unseen chariot, and permitted

to see the opening of heaven even sooner than he opens his eyes. He rises and it is as if he had gotten wings. The whole sky is luminous about him. It is the morning, as it were, of a new eternity. After this all troublesome doubt of God's reality is gone, for he has found him! A being so profoundly felt must inevitably be.

"Now this conversion, calling it by that name as we properly should, may seem, in the apprehension of some, to be a conversion *for* the gospel, and not *in* it or *by* it—a conversion by the want of truth more than by the power of truth. But that will be a judgment more superficial than the facts permit. No, it is exactly this; it is seeking first the kingdom of God and his righteousness—exactly that, and nothing less. And the dimly groping cry for help, what is that but a feeling after God, if, haply, it may find him, and actually finding him not far off? And what is the help obtained but exactly the true Christ-help? And the result, what, also, is that, but the kingdom of God within, righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost?

"There is a story lodged in the little bedroom of one of these dormitories which I pray God his recording angel may note, allowing it never to be lost."

Ibid., pages 58, 59.

Study XIV. How to Know the Particular Will of God. (a) The Views of Modern Religious Leaders

SECOND DAY

Canon Mozley—"Love"

"The New Testament describes, in various parts, what spiritual character is, its expressions and manifestations; but there is one gift which sums up all the features of it,—the gift of love or charity. This is a comprehensive term in Scripture, to denote a combination of qualities of mind, and there is a description of such a person, given by St. Paul in the First Epistle to the Corinthians, which has stood as the great Christian portrait in all ages. . . . . There are those who stand out from among the crowd, which reflects merely the atmosphere of feeling and standard of society around it, with an impress upon them which bespeaks a heavenly birth. Their criterion of what is valuable, and to be sought after, is different from that of others. They do not press forward for the prizes of this world; they stand apart from the struggle in which common minds are absorbed. But they do this without spiritual pride, they think little of themselves and much of others, and they have a love of their brethren and of all whom God has made after his own image. They have these and other great common characteristics, though they have differences of natural disposition, and exhibit the action of divine grace, each in the form in which his natural character is adapted to show it."

Mozley: *Sermons before the University of Oxford, page 240.*

Study XIV. How to Know the Particular Will of God. (a) The Views of Modern Religious Leaders

THIRD DAY

Frederick W. Robertson—"Be Generous, Chaste, True, Brave"

"It is an awful moment when the soul begins to find that the props on which it has blindly rested so long are, many of them, rotten, and begins to suspect them all; when it begins to feel the nothingness of many of the traditionary opinions which have been received with implicit confidence, and in that horrible insecurity begins also to doubt whether there be anything to believe at all. It is an awful hour—let him who has passed through it say how awful—when this life has lost its meaning, and seems shriveled into a span; when the grave appears to be the end of all, human goodness nothing but a name, and the sky above this universe a dead expanse, black with the void from which God himself has disappeared. In that fearful loneliness of spirit, when those who should have been his friends and counsellors only frown upon his misgivings, and profanely bid him stifle doubts which, for aught he knows, may arise from the fountain of truth itself; to extinguish, as a glare from hell, that which, for aught he knows, may be light from heaven, and everything seems wrapped in hideous uncertainty, I know but one way in which a man may come forth from his agony scathless; it is by holding fast to those things which are certain still—the grand, simple landmarks of morality. In the darkest hour through which a soul can pass, whatever else is doubtful, this at least is certain. If there be no God and no future state, yet even then *it is better to be generous than selfish, better to be chaste than licentious, better to be true than false, better to be brave than to be a coward.* Blessed beyond all earthly blessedness is the man who, in the tempestuous darkness of the soul, has dared to hold fast to these venerable landmarks. Thrice blessed is he who—when all is drear and cheerless within and without, when his teachers terrify him, and his friends shrink from

him—has obstinately clung to moral good. Thrice blessed because *his* night shall pass into clear, bright day.

"I appeal to the recollection of any man who has passed through that hour of agony, and stood upon the rock at last, the surges stilled below him, and the last cloud drifted from the sky above, with a faith and hope and trust no longer traditional but of his own—a trust which neither earth nor hell shall shake thenceforth forever."

BROOKE: *Life and Letters of F. W. Robertson, Vol. I., Chapter III.*

Study XIV. How to Know the Particular Will of God. (a) The Views of Modern Religious Leaders

FOURTH DAY

Henry Drummond—"Practice I Cor. 13: 4-6"

"How many of you will join me in reading this chapter [I Cor. 13] once a week for the next three months? A man did that once and it changed his whole life. [This is one of Drummond's impersonal allusions to himself. *H. B. W.*] Will you do it? It is for the greatest thing in the world. You might begin by reading it every day, especially the verses which describe the perfect character, 'Love suffereth long, and is kind; love envieth not; love vaunteth not itself.' Get these ingredients into your life. Then everything that you do is eternal. It is worth doing. It is worth giving time to. No man can become a saint in his sleep; and to fulfil the condition required demands a certain amount of prayer and meditation and time, just as improvement in any direction, bodily or mental, requires preparation and care. Address yourself to that one thing; at any cost have this transcendent character exchanged for yours. You will find as you look back upon your life that the moments that stand out, the moments when you have really lived, are the moments when you have done things in a spirit of love. As memory scans the past, above and beyond all the transitory pleasures of life, there leap forward those supreme hours when you have been enabled to do unnoticed kindnesses to those round about you, things too trifling to speak about, but which you feel have entered into your eternal life. I have seen almost all the beautiful things God has made: I have enjoyed almost every pleasure he has planned for man: and yet as I look back I see standing out above all the life that has gone, four or five short experiences when the love of God reflected itself in some poor imitation, some small act of love of mine, and these seem to be the things which alone of all one's life abide. Everything else in all our

lives is transitory. Every other good is visionary. But the acts of love which no man knows about or can ever know about—they never fail."

DRUMMOND: *The Greatest Thing in the World, pages 59-61.*

Study XIV. How to Know the Particular Will of God. (a) The Views of Modern Religious Leaders

FIFTH DAY

Robert E. Speer—"This is the Will of God: (1) That Ye Believe in Christ, John 6:29. (2) That Ye be Sanctified, I Thess. 4: 3. (3) That No One Should Perish, Matt. 18: 14"

"So clearly that we may never miss it, the Bible suggests the three great outlines of God's will. All the rest is comparatively unimportant detail. The will of God for every man and woman is this, first of all: 'This is the work (or the will) of God, that ye should believe on him whom God hath sent.' That is first. No one of us can ever discover anything else about the will of God until we have taken that first step. The first will of God for every man and woman is that the child of God should enter into Christ's life, and believe on him. There are many ways of stating this truth. Jesus, of course, chose the best of them all: that the will of God consisted in believing in him, consisted in entering into his friendship, in getting into moral and spiritual sympathy with him, in making a complete surrender of life to him. That is the will of God for each of us.

"What is next? 'This is the will of God, even your sanctification,' your holiness of life; that we should go in Christ's fellowship to a life of Christ's fullness, to a life enriched with all that Christ came to bring, to a life in which Christ himself is all that he can be to the souls of men.

"And what is third? 'It is not God's will that any man should perish.' It is God's will that all should come unto life. However narrow you and I may be, God has a heart of universal love. He would save every man if he could. His love is so large that every soul in the world is embraced in it, and only those fall out of it who antagonize his will."

SPEER: *"Remember Jesus Christ," pages 105-107.*

Study XIV. How to Know the Particular Will of God. (a) The Views of Modern Religious Leaders

SIXTH DAY

Lyman Abbott—"Follow Christ in Your Life"

"What shall I do to get this fellowship with the Great Companion and the fruits of this fellowship? Follow Christ in your life, and leave him to bring to you the fellowship and its fruits. . . . . Forget yourself, and think only of your duty. Do what Christ bids you do, regardless of the question whether he gives you peace for doing it or not. Read the Sermon on the Mount, and then try to live it. 'Let your light so shine.' Do you know, or can you find, any darkened home? Go into it and carry the illumination of a bright and cheery presence. 'Love your enemies.' Do you know any one who has done you an ill turn? Study how you can do him a good turn. Give the whole of your mind to doing each hour the duty which lies next to you. And when the day is over, waste no time in an idle review to see whether you have done your duty well or not. Put your thoughts on the morrow, on the question what you can find to do to make some one happier and better for your being in the world. If you have peace be glad of it. If you have no peace, go on just the same, resolved to show yourself, the world, and your Master how loyal you can be to your own life, to your fellowmen, and to him."

ABBOTT: *The Great Companion, pages 118, 119, 123, 124.*

Study XIV. How to Know the Particular Will of God. (a) The Views of Modern Religious Leaders

SEVENTH DAY

There can be no doubt that each one of these six men found God as a present counselor and companion through that standard which he himself selected. Which one of the six shall we select as our absolute standard to recommend to all men? Bushnell says, "Do the right"—but what is the right? Different men have different standards; Bushnell's standard is comprehensive but too general. Mozley says, "Love"—but do the majority of men understand love in the sense in which he meant it? This again is comprehensive but too general. Robertson says, "Be generous, chaste, true and brave"; here is an attempt to analyze Bushnell's "The right" into its elements; but are not these mostly of one sort—the aggressive rather than the self-effacing virtues? Henry Drummond says, "Practice I Cor. 13 [4-6]." Just the opposite objection may be brought to this; it is not complete in that it is concerned almost entirely with the self-effacing virtues at the expense of the aggressive. Speer says, "Sanctify yourself, believe on Christ, and devote yourself to his program for the salvation of the world"; here we have the aggressive and the self-effacing virtues brought together, but in too technical terms to be practical for the novice. "What," he asks, "is sanctification, and what is it to believe on Christ, what creed and what method of work am I to follow?" Lyman Abbott says, "Follow Christ in your life"; everything is contained in this, but the ordinary man needs more specific and detailed instruction.

Placing these six proposed standards before us, studying the full meaning of all the words used in them, can we reduce them to three of four basic fundamental principles which will include them all and which their respective proposers found or read into them from innate moral standards?

Are there absolute standards of right and wrong? How did Jesus find out the particular will of God for himself? He says that "he did *always* the things which were pleasing

to God" (John 8 [29]) and the result was that he was sure of God's presence and guidance (John 8 [29], first half). What were these things that were pleasing to God?

Let us go back then to the teaching of Jesus and the Apostles to see if we can reconstruct the touchstone which they must have applied to every question which arose, to discover the particular will of God for each step in their lives.

STUDY XV

How to Know the Particular Will of God (b) The Fourfold Touchstone of Jesus and the Apostles

Jesus. { PURITY—Matt. 5: 29. UNSELFISHNESS—Luke 14: 33.
HONESTY—Luke 16: 11. LOVE—John 15: 12.

"*For this is the will of God* . . . . that ye abstain from fornication, that each one of you know how to possess himself of his own vessel in sanctification and honor [PURITY] . . . . that no man overreach and wrong his brother in the matter [HONESTY] . . . . but concerning love of the brethren ye have no need that one write unto you [LOVE] . . . . and that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business and to work with your hands [UNSELFISHNESS].—*I Thess. 4: 3-12.*

"Wherefore, putting away falsehood, speak ye truth each one with his neighbor . . . . let him that stole steal no more [HONESTY] . . . . . and be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving each other [UNSELFISHNESS] . . . . and walk in love, even as Christ . . . . gave himself [LOVE] . . . . but fornication, and all uncleanness, let it not even be named among you . . . . nor filthiness [PURITY] . . . . *wherefore be ye not foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.*" —*Eph. 4:25—5:17.*

"*Set your mind* on the things that are above . . . . put to death therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire [PURITY] . . . . lie not one to another [HONESTY] . . . . put on therefore . . . . a heart of compassion, kindness, lowliness, meekness, longsuffering; forbearing one another and forgiving each other, if any man hath a complaint against any [UNSELFISHNESS]; . . . . and above all things put on love [LOVE]." —*Col. 3: 2-14.*

"But *the wisdom that is from above* is first pure [PURITY], then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy [UNSELFISHNESS] and good fruits [LOVE], without variance, without hypocrisy [HONESTY]. —*James 3: 17.*

"Do not kill, do not commit adultery [PURITY]: do not steal, do not bear false witness, do not defraud [HONESTY], honor thy father and mother, ... go, sell what thou hast [UNSELFISHNESS], give to the poor, ... and come, follow me [LOVE]."
Jesus to the Rich Young Ruler—*Mark 10:19-21.*

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Study XV. How to Know the Particular Will of God. (b) The Fourfold Touchstone of Jesus and the Apostles

FIRST DAY

The Absolute Standards of Jesus

Purity—Matt. 5: 27-32.
Honesty—John 8: 44, 45, 46; Luke 16: 11.
Unselfishness—Luke 14: 33.
Love—John 15: 12.

Read carefully *Speer,* The Principles of Jesus. Chapter VI.—"Jesus and Standards."

Are there absolute standards of right and wrong? How did Jesus find out the will of God for himself? He says that he did *always* [i.e. without exception] the things which were pleasing to God. (John 8 [29].) We are to infer that through this act of his he cleaned and strengthened his will to receive the compelling conviction from God. The result was that he was sure of God's presence and guidance (John 8 [29], first half). But what were these things that were pleasing to God?

Mr. Robert E. Speer has reconstructed from the teaching of Jesus the four standards in regard to which he never allowed himself an exception and with reference to which his teaching is absolute and unyielding. Jesus gives us no direct teaching in regard to such things as smoking, drinking, card playing, theatre, dancing, etc. He recognized that some men could decide one way and others just the opposite on like questions and yet both sides be true Christians. But in regard to four things there was no such option. A man *must* be pure, he *must* be honest, he *must* be unselfish, he *must* express himself in deeds of love or else he cannot see the kingdom of God. There is no exception to be made on these four counts.

Study XV. How to Know the Particular Will of God. (b) The Fourfold Touchstone of Jesus and the Apostles

SECOND DAY

These Standards can be Easily Comprehended by all Men. They are Unanswerable when once Stated

John 7: 53—8: 11=Purity an unanswerable standard.
Matt. 21: 28-32=Honesty an unanswerable standard.
Mark 10: 17-22=Unselfishness an unanswerable standard.
Luke 10: 25-37=Love an unanswerable standard.

The peculiarity of these four standards is that, in the first place, they are so simple that any man can understand them himself when they are once stated, no matter how simple he may be; and that in the second place they are so fundamental that no man dares deny that they should be followed by others, no matter how clever and wicked *he* may be. They need no explanation or defense when once stated. The reason is that there is inborn in all humanity the distinction between right and wrong and these standards are the four elements of right.

"If there be no God and no future state, yet even then it is better to be generous than selfish, better to be chaste than licentious, better to be true than false, better to be brave than to be a coward."

F. W. Robertson.

THIRD DAY

Their Comprehensiveness, and Jesus' Teaching about Their Acceptance or Rejection

Absolute Standards of Jesus are	Jesus Increased (Luke 2: 52) in	The Great Commandment is to Love God (Mark 12: 28-31) with	The Full Grown Man (cf. Eph. 4: 13) is	The Laws of the Kingdom Do Not Lessen, but Emphasize the Sinfulness of
Purity	Stature	Strength	Body—Physical	Passion—Matt. 5: 21-32.
Honesty	Wisdom	Mind	Mind—Intellectual	Dishonesty—Matt. 5: 33-37.
Unselfishness	Favor with man	Heart	Heart—Social	Selfishness—Matt. 5: 38-42.
Love	Favor with God	Soul	Soul—Spiritual	Lovelessness—Matt. 5: 43-48.

No man will develop physically who is impure.
No man will develop intellectually who is dishonest.
No man will develop socially who is selfish.
No man will develop spiritually who will not express himself in deeds of love.

The Issues of Acceptance or Rejection of these Standards.

	Acceptance.	Rejection.
Purity	"Shall see God."—Matt. 5: 8.	"Be cast into hell."—Matt 5: 29
Honesty	"Shall be entrusted with the true riches."—Luke 16: 10-12.	"Shall *not* be entrusted with true riches."—Luke 16: 11, 12.
Unselfishness	"Shall save his life."—Luke 9: 24.	"Shall lose his life."—Luke 9: 24.
Love	"Shall inherit the kingdom."—Matt. 25: 34.	"Depart into the eternal fire."—Matt. 25: 41.

Study XV. How to Know the Particular Will of God. (b) The Fourfold Touchstone of Jesus and the Apostles

FOURTH DAY

Their Interpretation and Practical Application by the Apostles as the Means of Determining God's Will

I Thess. 4: 3-12.
Romans 12: 1—13: 10.
Col. 3: 2-14.
Eph. 4: 25—5: 17.
James 3: 17.
I Peter 1st and 2d chapters.

Introductory Phrase.	I Thess. 4: 3-12 "This is the will of God." verse 3	Col. 3: 2-14. "Set your minds on" verse 2	Eph. 4: 25—5: 17. "Understand what the will of the Lord is." 5: 17	James 3: 17, "Wisdom from above"
PURITY	verses 3-5	verses 5-8	5: 3-14	"Pure"
HONESTY	verse 6	verses 9-11	4: 25-30	"Without variance, without hypocrisy"
UNSELFISHNESS	verses 11, 12	verses 12, 13	4: 31, 32	"Peaceable," etc.
LOVE	verses 9, 10	verse 14	5: 1, 2	"Good fruits"

Study XV. How to Know the Particular Will of God. (b) The Fourfold Touchstone of Jesus and the Apostles

FIFTH DAY

Their Practical Use Today as a Touchstone to Determine the Particular Will of God for Each Step of Our Career

To every problem, great or small, which presents itself—in a small matter like one's bearing in a game of sport, in a large matter like the choice of a life career—the Christian who is absolutely surrendered to God asks himself this question: "Is the step which I had planned to take an absolutely pure one? is it an absolutely honest one? is it the most unselfish one? is it the fullest possible expression of my love? If it is every one of these four, it must be the will of God for me. If it fails to measure up to any one of these four standards it cannot be God's will and I must not take it, no matter what the refusal may cost me in suffering, mental or physical." As he holds his instrument of apprehension—the human will—resolutely to this standard, the Christian is conscious of its becoming strong both to know and to do God's will and there comes the undoubted, the compelling conviction which guides and impels him forward.

This seems like a simple thing, but in it lies the secret of the miracle of obedience. "It has been before the world these eighteen hundred years yet few have even found it out today." (*Drummond,* The Ideal Life, page 229.) It is like the story in the Old Testament. "My father, if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldest thou not have done it? how much rather when he saith to thee, Wash and be clean." (II Kings 5 [13].)

"How this finite and this infinite are brought to touch, how this invisible will of God is brought to the temporal heart, must ever remain unknown. The mysterious meet-

ing place in the prepared and willing heart between the human and divine—where precisely the will is finally moved into line with God's—of these things knoweth no man, save only the spirit of God."

DRUMMOND: *The Ideal Life, page 318.*

Study XV. How to Know the Particular Will of God. (b) The Fourfold Touchstone of Jesus and the Apostles

SIXTH DAY

The Paradox of the Touchstone—an Absolutely Rigid Touchstone to Which no Exception may be Made and yet an Infinite Variety of Results, Some Exactly Opposite

Luke 7 [31-35].

This touchstone helps young men to reach a decision in the most perplexing question as to what to do in regard to the so-called doubtful pleasures—smoking, drinking, theatre, dancing, etc. Let a young man ask himself, Can I do these things and remain pure, honest, unselfish and loving? A man must be absolutely honest with himself, however, in deciding whether he is pure, honest, unselfish and loving. Let us take a practical example, e. g. smoking.

Shall I smoke? 1. Does it affect my *purity*—excite the sensual? If it does it must go—the alternative is given in Jesus' own words (Matt. 5 [29, 30]).

2. Does it affect my *honesty?* Granted that I can remain pure, am I deceiving some parents or relatives who hold narrower views about it? If so, I must stop—a lie is damning.

3. Does it affect my *unselfishness?* Granted that I am pure and honest in it, do I forget the rights of others in my own personal self-gratification? am I selfish or irritable without it? If so I must stop—selfishness is the death of the soul.

4. Does it affect my *active service* of others? Granted that I am pure and honest and unselfish in it, does it take my time and energy? Life is short—one must use all the motive power. Waste is a crime and lovelessness is death

Study XV. How to Know the Particular Will of God. (b) The Fourfold Touchstone of Jesus and the Apostles

SEVENTH DAY—REVIEW

1. Was Jesus ever impure?
2. Was Jesus ever dishonest?
3. Was Jesus ever selfish?
4. Was Jesus ever unloving?

Cite instances.

STUDY XVI

The Fourfold Touchstone—(a) The First Test—Purity

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God . . . . with all thy strength." —*Mark 12: 30.*

"If thy right eye causeth thee to stumble, pluck it out, and cast it from thee." —*Matt. 5: 29.*

"Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God." —*Matt. 5: 8.*

"For this is the will of God . . . . that ye abstain from fornication; that each one of you know how to possess himself of his own vessel in sanctification and honor." —*I Thess. 4: 3, 4.*

"But fornication, and all uncleanness . . . . let it not be named among you . . . . nor filthiness nor foolish talking, or jesting. . . . . Wherefore be ye not foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is." —*Eph. 5: 3, 17.*

"Set your mind on the things that are above. . . . . Put to death therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire." —*Col. 3: 2, 5.*

"But the wisdom that is from above is first pure."—*James 3: 17.*

"But if thou . . . . gloriest in God, and knowest his will . . . . thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery?" —*Rom. 2: 17, 18, 22.*

"And they that are in the flesh cannot please God."—*Rom. 8: 8.*

Is the step which I had planned to take an absolutely pure one? If it is not it cannot be God's will for my life.

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Study XVI. The Fourfold Touchstone. (a) The First Test—Purity

FIRST DAY

What Do We Mean by Purity?

Matt. 5 [8, 27-32]; II Peter 2 [14].

"If we go to analogy, purity is, in character, what transparency is in the crystal. It is water flowing, unmixed and clear, from the mountain spring. Or it is the white of snow. Or it is the clear open heaven, through which the sparkling stars appear, hidden by no mist of obstruction. Or it is the pure light itself in which they shine. A pure character is that, in mind and feeling and spirit of life, which all these clear, untarnished symbols of nature, image, in their lower and merely sensible sphere, to our outward eye."

"Labor then with all closest, most passionate application to conceive purity, what it would be to you if your soul were in it; the consciousness of it; the essential peace; the elevation above all passion and all unregulated impulse; the singleness and simplicity of it; the glowing shapes and glorified visions of a pure imagination; the oneness of your soul with God; the conscious participation of what is highest in God—his untemptable chastity in goodness and truth."

BUSHNELL: *The New Life, pages 263-4, 273.*

If carried to its full meaning absolute purity would include victory over every sin (Matt. 5 [48]; Gal. 5 [19, 21]). Practically we confine it to the mastery of the animal, fleshly instincts in our nature. Impurity is yielding our will to the animal either in the realm of thought or of act. Purity is the *mastery* of the animal (not the extinction of the sexual) by the human will.

An absolutely pure man from the Christian standpoint:

1. May have impure suggestions and images come to his mind (John 7 [53]—8 [11]). Impurity enters with the act of will which allows them to stay in artificial contexts.

2. Is controlled in his married life by considerations of efficiency in his work, of health, of unselfishness and of love

(I Cor. 7 [1-7]; Mark 10 [6-12]). Questions of purity may arise in marriage as without; as in relation to the avoidance of children, etc.

"Fastidiousness . . . . is not any evidence of purity but the contrary. . . . . When any disciple, therefore, calls it purity to be shocked or repelled by the scripture names of sins or the practical works of mercy needed in a world of shame and defilement, he reveals therein a bad imagination and a mind that is itself defiled."

BUSHNELL: *Ibid., page 278.*

Study XVI. The Fourfold Touchstone. (a) The First Test—Purity

SECOND DAY

Subtle Forms of Impurity

I Cor. 3 [3], 10 [7]; Rom. 1 [24-32], 16 [17, 18]; Eph. 2 [2, 3], 5 [3, 4]; II Tim. 2 [22]; Titus 1 [15].

Mark 4 [24]; Matt. 14 [6-10].

"[The impure man] before he does wrong makes all manner of subtle excuse."

Fragment of a Lost Gospel (Oxyrhynchus Papyri, Pt. V., page 7, 1907).

"Foul stories and impure jests and innuendoes, more clearly than oaths and curses befoul the souls of those who utter them while they lead the hearers into sin. Such things rob all who are concerned in them, either as speakers or listeners, of two things which are the chief safeguards of virtue—the fear of God and the fear of sin. They create an atmosphere in which men sin with a light heart, because the grossest sins are made to look not only attractive and easy, but amusing. What can be made to seem laughable is supposed to be not very serious."

PLUMMER: *Expositor's Bible, James, page 188.*

Impure imaginations and thoughts.

Objects pure in themselves which by association recall impure images.

Slighting references to women.

Ballet—Many forms of vaudeville and much in modern drama.

Many modern so-called physical culture publications.

Biographs and living pictures.

Advertisements which appeal to the passions and much which goes under the name of "art" in modern magazines.

Certain forms of souvenir postal cards.

Some fiction, art, and dress styles.

Flirtation where no true bond of love is intended.

Study XVI. The Fourfold Touchstone. (a) The First Test—Purity

THIRD DAY

The Physical, Intellectual, Social and Spiritual Results of Impurity

I Cor. 3 [16, 17], 6 [9, 12-20]; Rom. 1 [26, 27, 32], 6 [16-21]; Matt. 5 [29, 30]; James 1 [14, 15]; Rev. 21 [8, 27], 22 [15]; II Peter 2 [9, 10, 18, 19].

"But give heed lest ye also suffer the same things as they; for the evil doers among men receive their reward not among the living only but also await punishment and much torture."

Fragment of Lost Gospel, Ibid.

Physical, loss of full efficiency of bodily powers.

Gal. 6 [8]; I Cor. 6 [18]; Rom. 7 [5]—the impure man is only one tenth of a man:

> "My good blade carves the casques of men,
> My tough lance thrusteth sure,
> My strength is as the strength of ten
> Because my heart is pure."
>
> TENNYSON: *Sir Galahad.*

Intellectual, loss of mind powers (Rom. 7 [23]).

"The passions are loose upon the reason, the will overturns the conscience, the desires become unruly, the thoughts are, some of them, suggested by the natural law of the mind, and some are thrust in by the disorders of vitiated feeling, corrupt imagination, disordered memory and morbid impulse. . . . . The man is corrupted, as we say, and the word *corrupt* means *broken* together, dissolved into mixture and confusion."

BUSHNELL: *Ibid., page 265.*

Social, lack of self-respect, hence morbid self-consciousness (Rom. 7 [18]).

Spiritual, cowardly shrinking from service of others and from duty, and separation from God (Rom. 7 [19], 8 [8]; Eph. 5 [5]; I Peter 2 [11]; I John 2 [16, 17]; Rev. 22 [14, 15]).

"It was not the mere muscle of the Teuton which enabled him to crush the decrepit and debauched slave nations. . . . . It had given him more, that purity of his: it had given him, as it may give you, gentlemen, a calm and steady brain, and a free and loyal heart; the energy which springs from health; the self-respect which comes from self-restraint; and the spirit which shrinks from neither God nor man, and feels it light to die for wife and child, for people and for Queen."

KINGSLEY: *The Roman and the Teuton, page 46.*

Study XVI. The Fourfold Touchstone. (a) The First Test—Purity

FOURTH DAY

The Purity of Jesus

Heb. 2 [18], 4 [15], 7 [26]; John 8 [46].

See *Speer,* The Principles of Jesus. Chapter XVII.—"Jesus and Women."

Study XVI. The Fourfold Touchstone. (a) The First Test—Purity

FIFTH DAY

Is a Conflict Possible Between the Demands of Purity and Those of Honesty, Unselfishness or Love (Self-expression)?

1. True purity presupposes honesty (Rom. 1 [24, 25]).

2. True purity presupposes victory over self (Eph. 4 [19]; Mark 7 [20-23]; 1 Peter 4 [1, 2]).

3. True purity presupposes love (self-expression) (I Tim. 1 [5]).

"There are no fires that will melt out our dross and corrupt particles like God's refining fires of duty and trial, living as he sends us to live, in the open field of the world's sins and sorrows—its plausibilities and lies—its persecutions, animosities, and fears—its eager delights and bitter wants. . . . . How necessary it is for the soul to be aired in the outward exposures of the world. . . . . Here *alone* in these common exposures of work and contacts of duty is true Christian purity itself successfully cultivated. Alas for the man who is obliged to be shut up to himself, as in the convent life, to face his own lusts, disorders and passions, and strangle them, in direct conflict, with nothing else to do or to occupy the soul."

BUSHNELL: *Ibid., pages 274, 275.*

Study XVI. The Fourfold Touchstone. (a) The First Test—Purity

SIXTH DAY

How to Grow in Purity

Gal. 5 [24]; II Cor. 10 [3-6]; Rom. 6 [12, 13], 8 [10], 12 [1, 2], 13 [14]; Col. 2 [20-23]; II Tim. 2 [22].

Matt. 26 [41]; Acts 15 [9]; James 1 [21], 4 [7, 8]; John 8 [36]; 15 [3]. I John 3 [2, 3].

"The way to purity is difficult of discovery only to those who practically do not care to find it."

BUSHNELL: *Ibid., page 273.*

"Can the soul's chastity, lost once, ever be recovered? . . . Let no such doubt be harbored. . . . . God has undertaken to redeem the fall of sin and restore the soul to purity. . . . . Browned by sin, mottled by the stains of a corrupted life, he has undertaken still to give it the whiteness of snow. . . . . God can raise it to a purity that is higher even than the purity of an intact virtue. He can make us untemptably pure." BUSHNELL: *Ibid., pages 271, 272.*

"Christ in other words, may be so completely put on that the whole consciousness may be of him, and all the motions of sins give way to the dominating efficacy of his harmonious and perfect mind . . . . the very current of thought, as it is propagated in the mind, may become so purified that, when the will does not interfere and the mind is allowed, for an hour, to run in its own way, without hindrance, one thing suggesting another as in revery, there may yet be no evil, wicked or foul suggestion thrust into it. Or in the state of sleep, where the will never interferes, but the thoughts rush on by a law of their own, the mixed causes of corruption may be so far cleared away, and the soul restored to such simplicity and pureness, that the dreams will be only dreams of love and beauty; peaceful and clear and happy, somewhat as we may imagine the waking thoughts of angels to be."

BUSHNELL: *Ibid., pages 267, 270.*

Study XVI. The Fourfold Touchstone. (a) The First Test—Purity

SEVENTH DAY—REVIEW

1. What other religions beside Christianity require chastity of their followers?

2. The problem of the nude in art. (Titus 1 [15]; Matt. 5 [29, 30].)

3. To what extent should a Christian be ignorant of evil? Is knowledge power? (II Cor. 6 [17]; Rom. 16 [19]; Eph. 5 [11-13].) (Cf. *Speer,* Marks of a Man. "Purity—A Plea for Ignorance.")

4. How subtle are the degrading influences of impurity on even the most surrendered lives? (John 7 [53]—8 [11]; Mark 2 [15, 17]; John 17 [15]; I Cor. 15 [33]; II Thess. 3 [6].)

5. Can a man ever reach a point where he will not be tempted to impurity? Where he will not yield to impurity?

6. The human mind is like a camera film. After exposure to an impure thought or suggestion it is possible to do one of two things; either to delay and develop the plate which fixes the picture permanently or instantly to flood the plate with the light of Jesus—then the picture is forever destroyed. This latter is what is meant by putting on Jesus. Pray instantly for him to come and take possession of *that particular, specific* thought or picture; and *mean it* when you pray. Do not pray the prayer of the temporizer, "Lord, make me pure, but not now."

7. For practical suggestions regarding the physical helps to a pure life see

Scudder: *Handbook for Young Men,* Chapters VIII., IX.
Sperry: *Talks with Young Men,* Chapters XV., XVI., XVII.
Stall: *What a Young Man Ought to Know,* Hindrances and Helps.
Hall: *Reproduction and Sexual Hygiene,* Chapter V., Hygiene.

STUDY XVII

The Fourfold Touchstone—(b) The Second Test—Honesty

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God . . . . with all thy mind."
—*Mark 12:30.*

"He that is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much; and he that is unrighteous in a very little is unrighteous also in much. If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?" —*Luke 16:10, 11.*

"And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." —*John 8:32.*

"Without are the dogs, and the sorcerers, and the fornicators, and the murderers, and the idolaters, and every one that loveth and maketh a lie." —*Rev. 22:15.*

"For this is the will of God . . . . that no man transgress (m. r., *overreach*) and wrong his brother in the matter."
—*I Thess. 4:3, 6.*

"Wherefore, putting away falsehood, speak ye truth each one with his neighbor . . . . let him that stole steal no more. . . . . Wherefore be ye not foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is." —*Eph. 4:25, 28; 5:17.*

"Set your mind on the things that are above . . . . lie not one to another; seeing that ye have put off the old man with his doings."
—*Col. 3:2, 9.*

"But the wisdom that is from above is . . . . without variance, without hypocrisy." —*James 3:17.*

"But if thou . . . . gloriest in God, and knowest his will . . . . thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal?"
—*Rom. 2:17, 18, 21.*

"Fear them not, therefore: for there is nothing covered that shall not be revealed; and hid that shall not be known.
—*Matt. 10:26.*

IS THE STEP WHICH I HAD PLANNED TO TAKE AN ABSOLUTELY HONEST ONE? IF IT IS NOT IT CANNOT BE GOD'S WILL FOR MY LIFE.

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Study XVII. The Fourfold Touchstone. (b) The Second Test—Honesty

FIRST DAY

What Do We Mean by Honesty?

Mark 14 [61, 62]; Titus 1 [2]; Rev. 19 [11-16].

"Character is what a man is in the dark."

If carried to its full meaning absolute honesty would also include victory over every sin, for a man ought to be honest with himself and his God as well as with his neighbors. Practically we limit it to the relations of a man with other men and divide its transgression into two main divisions—lying and stealing. A common element in both is deception, and the question of honesty concerns itself with the motive—the voluntary act.

(a) A lie is a story told or a part acted with the intention to deceive.

(b) Stealing—"It will at once be seen that there are only three ways in which man can come into possession of anything; either by the free gift of another person, or by toil which receives something as legitimate return, or by theft, the taking that from another which belongs to him."

MORGAN: *The Ten Commandments, page 90.*

An absolutely honest man from Jesus' standpoint may have secrets which he refuses to tell—dishonesty comes when he tells the facts other than they are or leads people to believe they are other than they are.

"One of the most beautiful examples of Mr. Lincoln's rigid honesty occurred in connection with the settlement of his accounts with the post office department several years afterwards. It was after he had become a lawyer and had been a legislator. He had passed through a period of great poverty, had acquired his education in the law in the midst of many perplexities, inconveniences and hardships, and had met with temptations such as few men could resist, to make a temporary

use of any money he might have in his hands. One day, seated in the law office of his partner, the agent of the post office department entered and enquired if Abraham Lincoln was within. Mr. Lincoln responded to his name, and was informed that the agent had called to collect a balance due to the department since the discontinuance of the New Salem office. A shade of perplexity passed over Mr. Lincoln's face which did not escape the notice of friends who were present. One of them said at once: 'Lincoln, if you are in want of money, let us help you.' He made no reply, but suddenly rose, and pulled out from a pile of books a little old trunk, and, returning to the table, asked the agent how much the amount of his debt was. The sum was named, and then Mr. Lincoln opened the trunk, pulled out a little package of coin wrapped in a cotton rag, and counted out the exact sum, amounting to something more than seventeen dollars. After the agent had left the room, he remarked quietly that he never used any man's money but his own. Although the sum had been in his hands during all these years, he had never regarded it as available even for any temporary purpose of his own."

HOLLAND: *Life of Abraham Lincoln, pages 55, 56.*

Study XVII. The Fourfold Touchstone. (b) The Second Test—Honesty

SECOND DAY

Subtle Forms of Dishonesty

Gal. 2 [12, 13]; II Cor. 12 [16-18]; Rom. 2 [8]; Luke 3 [12-14]; James 5 [4]; John 10 [1].

All bluffing in recitation. Copying essays or outlines. Cribbing words on the pages of text-books. Unauthorized helps. (The final test as to whether they are honorable or not —ask the instructor.)

All gambling or betting.

Refusing to consult a doctor when one knows something is wrong; unwillingness to face the whole truth.

Purposely obscure handwriting when one does not know how to spell a word.

All hypocrisy and all self-repression. "There are two forms of hypocrisy; one is pretending to be more than you are: the other, which is just as truly hypocrisy, is pretending to be less than you are" (John 12 [42, 43]; John 8 [55]).

Taking credit for ideas or achievements which do not belong to one. Not keeping engagements and promises.

Letting someone else suffer for one's transgressions and crimes. Evasions of taxes, customs-duty, etc. (Rom. 13 [7]).

Debts (Rom. 13 [8]).

Sharp dealing in trade (Luke 16 [10, 11]; Prov. 20 [14]).

Exaggeration or play of fancy on facts (II Cor. 4 [2], 12 [6]).

Mixing money accounts.

Sending mail under a cheaper class than is right.

Telling the truth in such a way that it deceives others.

Evasion of railway or trolley fare.

Disclosing of personal confidences.

Study XVII. The Fourfold Touchstone. (b) The Second Test—Honesty

THIRD DAY

The Physical, Intellectual, Social and Spiritual Results of Dishonesty

I Cor. 6 [10]; II Cor. 13 [8].

Physical. Nervousness due to fear of discovery (John 3 [20, 21]; 8 [34]).

Intellectual. A deceiver soon comes to distrust himself and his mental judgments (John 8 [43-45]; 3 [20, 21]). "Just in so far as [distrust] prevails in any life, even in the most heroic, the man fails and his work will have to be done over again."

HUGHES: *Manliness of Christ.*

Social. (Eph. 4 [25].) "You hold that a lie is sometimes justifiable. How can I know when you think it is? The circumstances may be such as to lead me to feel that at whatever cost or pain to you, you owe me the truth and you may think that they are such as to warrant your lying to me. This transfers the moral foundations of society from solid principle to the utterly precarious and unreliable basis of individual caprice."

SPEER: *The Marks of a Man, page 23.*

Spiritual. (Rom. 2 [8, 9]; Rev. 21 [27].) "The Bible opens with a picture of the first pair in Paradise to whom God tells the simple truth and to whom the enemy of man tells a lie; and it shows the ruin of mankind wrought by that lie and the author of the lie punished because of its telling. The Bible closes with a picture of Paradise into which are gathered the lovers and doers of truth and from which is excluded every one that loveth and doeth a lie, while all liars are to have their part in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."

TRUMBULL.

Study XVII. The Fourfold Touchstone. (b) The Second Test—Honesty

FOURTH DAY

The Honesty of Jesus

[Isaiah *53* [9]].
John 1 [17].

See *Speer,* Principles of Jesus. Chapters XXXIX., XL. —"Jesus and Veracity," "Jesus and Falsehood."

Study XVII. The Fourfold Touchstone. (b) The Second Test—Honesty

FIFTH DAY

Is a Conflict Possible Between the Demands of Honesty and Those of Purity, Unselfishness or Love (Self-expression)?

Gal. 4 [16].

1. True honesty presupposes purity (John 8 [44]).

2. True honesty presupposes mastery of self (II Thess. 3 [8]; Eph. 4 [28]; Titus 3 [8]. Cf. margin "profess honest occupations.") The selfish man lets others do his rightful work for him and is thus dishonest, getting something for nothing. The selfish man can never tell the exact truth because unconsciously his own prejudices color all he says (John 8 [45]).

3. True honesty presupposes love (Eph. 4 [15]; James 3 [14-16]). The question as to whether or not to deceive a sick man about his condition or the death of others may well be raised here. As a matter of fact the problem is not such an excruciating one as it is sometimes made out. If a man tells the truth selfishly, without love, just because of the innate passion of some men to be the first to impart news it may be such a shock as to kill the sick man. In reality the gossiper is not telling the truth. He is overstating. But the exact truth, *if told in love,* with sympathy, in such a loving way that the sick man lets us share part of the grief, is less dangerous than suspension due to deceit and the necessity of bearing one's burden alone.

Study XVII. The Fourfold Touchstone. (b) The Second Test—Honesty

SIXTH DAY

How to Grow in Honesty

[Psalm 139]; I Cor. 6 [11]; II Cor. 5 [9, 10]; Heb. 4 [13]. Heb. 12 [1]; John 8 [31, 32, 36], 18 [37].

Realize that Jesus is always at your side although you do not see him. He knows everything we do (John 4 [17], 2 [25]). Dishonesty is always done in what men think is the dark. In reality this is not so (Ps. 139). God and Jesus and those of our friends who belong to the great crowd of witnesses see everything we do. When the latter were on earth—father, mother, sister, brother, husband, wife, son, daughter—we could conceal our dishonesty and sin from them. But now do not they see everything? When the temptation to dishonesty comes pray that Jesus and they may see what you are about to do. In other words, *put on Jesus.*

Study XVII. The Fourfold Touchstone. (b) The Second Test—Honesty

SEVENTH DAY—REVIEW

1. Is strategy and deception in athletics right, e.g. curve-pitching, feint-attack, etc.?

2. What does Paul mean by II Cor. 6[8]? Does this justify deception?

3. Is the alternative of death, either of self or others, a sufficient justification for not telling the truth?

4. Is it ever right to lie "that good may come"? for country's sake? in war? in court? in the sickroom? Does good always come as a result of the lie of necessity or expediency?

5. Was Martin Luther's position in regard to lying justifiable—"What is the harm of a good, plump lie for the sake of the Christian church?" (See *Henderson,* A Short History of Germany, Vol. I., page 372.) What was the historical result of this lie?

STUDY XVIII

The Fourfold Touchstone—(c) The Third Test—Unselfishness

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart."
—*Mark 12:30.*

"So therefore whosoever he be of you that renounceth not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple." —*Luke 14:33.*

"If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me. For whosoever would save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it." —*Luke 9:23, 24.*

"For this is the will of God . . . . that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your hands . . . . that ye may walk becomingly toward them that are without, and may have need of nothing." —*I Thess. 4:3, 11, 12.*

"Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and railing, be put away from you, with all malice: and be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving each other. . . . . Wherefore be ye not foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is."
—*Eph. 4:31, 32; 5:17.*

"Set your minds on the things that are above. . . . . Put on therefore . . . . a heart of compassion, kindness, lowliness, meekness, longsuffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving each other, if any man have a complaint against any."
—*Col. 3:2, 12, 13.*

"But the wisdom that is from above is . . . . peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy." —*James 3:17.*

IS THE STEP WHICH I HAD PLANNED TO TAKE THE MOST UNSELFISH ONE? IF IT IS NOT IT CANNOT BE GOD'S WILL FOR MY LIFE.

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The difference between Unselfishness and Love.

I. Jesus' teaching makes a clear distinction between unselfishness and love.

Unselfishness is passive (Luke 14 [33], 9 [23, 24])—self-mastery, self-renunciation, the effacement of self when self is tempted to express itself in what we may call the sins of the heart (as distinct from those of the body and mind), i.e. in Anger, Pride, Suspicion, Envy, etc. Bushnell has well characterized this as *"Patience."*

Love, on the other hand, is always active. It is the expression, the pouring forth of the mastered, controlled, renounced, effaced self in God-inspired and God-directed deeds of love. Self has been got out of the way and God works through the unchoked channel. Jesus always used love in this sense as implying action, not a mere emotion (Luke 10 [25-37]; John 21 [15-17]; Matt. 25 [31-46]). Only in such a sense can a man love God with body, mind, heart and soul (Mark 12 [30]). Speer has well characterized this as *"Service."*

II. Paul's analysis of love in I Cor. 13, on the contrary, embraces both of Jesus' conceptions of unselfishness and of love (of patience and of service, of self-effacement and of self-expression) under a more general term "Love." In the analysis there are seven self-effacing virtues (i.e. the traits of Jesus' "unselfishness")—Patience, Freedom from Envy, Humility, Courtesy, Waiving of One's Rights, Good Temper, Guilelessness; and two self-expressing virtues (i.e. the traits of Jesus' "love")—Kindness, Championing of Righteousness and Truth.

In our present study, "Unselfishness," we concern ourselves with the first seven; in the next study, "Love," with the last two.

Study XVIII. The Fourfold Touchstone. (c) The Third Test—Unselfishness

FIRST DAY

What Do We Mean by Unselfishness?

I Cor. 8 [9]; Rom. 14 [13-28]; Matt. 5 [38-42]; John 3 [29, 30], 17 [19].

"I only design to exhibit what many are so apt to overlook or forget, the sublime efficacy of those virtues which belong to the receiving, suffering, patient side of character. They are such as meekness, gentleness, forbearance, forgiveness, the endurance of wrong without anger and resentment, contentment, quietness, peace, and unambitious love. . . . . To bear evil and wrong, to forgive, to suffer no resentment under injury, to be gentle when nature burns with a fierce heat, and pride clamors for redress, to restrain envy, to bear defeat with a firm and peaceful mind, not to be vexed or fretted by cares, losses or petty injuries, to abide in contentment and serenity of spirit, when trouble and disappointment come—these are conquests, alas, how difficult to most of us! Accordingly it will be seen that a true Christian man is distinguished from other men, not so much by his beneficent works as by his patience."

BUSHNELL: *The New Life, pages 400, 401.*

If carried to its full meaning absolute unselfishness would also include victory over every sin. Unselfishness is mastery or effacement of self, and all impurity, dishonesty and self-repression are selfish. Practically we limit it to the traits of the heart. Unselfishness is to think of the results of your action on the other fellow, to curb yourself in so far as it might injure others. Wherever self asserts itself to the injury of others in impatience, envy, pride, discourtesy, greed, temper or suspicion, there is selfishness.

An absolutely unselfish man according to Jesus' standpoint:

Can be righteously impatient (Luke 19 [45, 46]).
Can be righteously jealous (Luke 9 [59-62]).

Can be righteously proud (Luke 10 [17-20]).
Can disregard polite formalities (Luke 13 [32]; 7 [44-47]).
Can be righteously self-assertive (John 8 [12]).
Can be righteously angry (Matt. 23 [13-36]).
Can be righteously suspicious (John 2 [24, 25]).

But only when he has so completely surrendered his own will to God and so effaced self that he is absolutely sure that there is no selfish motive in his action and that God is working through him for the good of other men.

For example: if I personally am insulted I have no right to be angry, I must bear the insult in patience; but if a poor defenceless woman is insulted I have a right to assert my righteous wrath to protect her.

I have no right to be proud of my achievement but I have a right to be proud of what my friends do. If my work is delayed by others I have no right to be impatient, but if my friend's is delayed I have a right to be impatient.

Unselfishness does not mean that a man becomes a nonentity. It means merely that for the future the goal or object of all his exertions is changed from self to others.

An unselfish man lives up to Gen. Horace Porter's maxim: "Never underrate yourself in action, and never overrate yourself in your official report."

Study XVIII. The Fourfold Touchstone. (c) The Third Test—Unselfishness

SECOND DAY

Subtle Forms of Selfishness

Rom. 12 [9-21]; Matt. 23 [1-12] (cf. also [13-39]), 6 [31].

How many of us live up daily to the following definitions of unselfishness? In what respects did Jesus fail to live up to them?

"It is almost a definition of a gentleman to say that he is one who never inflicts pain. He is mainly occupied in merely removing the obstacles which hinder the free and unembarrassed action of those about him, and he concurs with their movements rather than takes the initiative himself. He carefully avoids whatever may cause a jar or a jolt in the minds of those with whom he is cast—all clashing of opinion or collision of feeling, all restraint or suspicion, or gloom, or resentment; his great concern being to make every one at his ease and at home. He has his eyes on all the company; he is tender towards the bashful, gentle towards the distant and merciful towards the absurd. He guards against unseasonable allusions, or topics which may irritate. He has no ear for slander or gossip, is scrupulous in imputing motives to those who interfere with him and interprets everything for the best."

NEWMAN.

"The forbearing use of power does not only form a touchstone, but the manner in which an individual enjoys certain advantages over others is the test of a true gentleman. The power which the strong have over the weak, the magistrate over the citizen, the employer over the employed, the educated over the unlettered, the experienced over the confiding, even the clever over the silly, the forbearing or inoffensive use of all this power or authority, or a total absence of it when the case admits it will show the gentleman in a plain light. The gentleman does not needlessly or unnecessarily remind an offender of a wrong he may have committed against

him. He can not only forgive; he can forget; and he strives for that nobleness of soul and mildness of character which imparts sufficient strength to let the past be the past. A true gentleman of honor feels humbled himself when he cannot help humbling others."

ROBERT E. LEE, *Outlook, 22 December, 1906, page 968.*

Subtle forms of selfishness.

Personal uncleanliness and slovenliness.
Impatience—with physical pain or delay.
Disappointment and sorrow brooded over.
Envy.
Pride.
Unwillingness to let others do for you.
Greed.
Ambition.
Discourtesy, especially to inferiors, e.g. servants.
Conceit.
Anger—bitterness—temper.
Suspicion.
Prejudice.
Insincerity.
Cruelty—abuse of children—cutting jests and nicknames.
Unwillingness to forgive (Matt. 18 [21] f).
Boisterousness and roughness.
Stubbornness.
Gloominess—"grouch."
Anxiety and nervousness.
Unwillingness to share another person's grief.
Overeating and overdrinking.
Overindulgence in pleasure (theatre, sport, etc.).
Show and display.
Lawlessness—not observing regulations (I Peter 2 [13-15]).
Smoking in the presence of strangers, e.g. trolley car, grand stand, etc.

Study XVIII. The Fourfold Touchstone. (c) The Third Test—Unselfishness

THIRD DAY

The Physical, Intellectual, Social and Spiritual Results of Selfishness

Luke 9 [23, 24].

Physical. A man can make himself sick and become a physical wreck by thinking of himself all the time. The best means of keeping well is to get the mind off of self.

Intellectual (Matt. 13 [22], 25 [14-30])=unproductivity.

Social (Matt. 23 [38]; Luke 15 [28]; John 13 [30])=loneliness.

Spiritual (Matt. 18 [3]; Luke 9 [24]; John 12 [25])=loss of the life of God in the soul of man.

Study XVIII. The Fourfold Touchstone. (c) The Third Test—Unselfishness

FOURTH DAY

The Unselfishness of Jesus

Phil. 2 [5-8]; Rev. 1 [9].

See a little pamphlet, "Paul's Analysis of Love as Illustrated in Christ's Life and Teaching" which can be obtained from the Bible Study Department, 124 East 28th Street, New York City. (Price, ten cents.)

Study XVIII. The Fourfold Touchstone. (c) The Third Test—Unselfishness

FIFTH DAY

Is a Conflict Possible Between the Demands of Unselfishness and Those of Purity, Honesty or Love (Self-expression)?

1. True unselfishness presupposes purity. Impurity is always gratification of self. Paul gives the selfish results of impurity in Rom. 1 [24-32] (esp. [29, 30] f).

2. True unselfishness presupposes honesty. Dishonesty is always selfish—on the very face of it when a man is dishonest to save himself or to procure gain for himself. When a man lies or steals for another this is either because he is afraid of the other man and does not dare to face his anger by refusal to be dishonest; or because he is not willing to suffer in the other man's place, by taking the other man's sins on himself in his position of mediator. In either case it is a very obvious form of selfishness.

3. True unselfishness presupposes love or self-expression. "By a little different process the Christian monks were turned to fiends of blood without being savages. Exercised day and night in a devotion that was aired by no outward social duties, waiting only on the dreams and visions of a cloistered religion, all the gentle humanities and social charities were absorbed or taken away. And then their very prayers would draw blood, and they would go out from the real presence itself to bless the knife or kindle the fire."

BUSHNELL: *The New Life, pages 176, 177.*

Study XVIII. The Fourfold Touchstone. (c) The Third Test—Unselfishness

SIXTH DAY

How to Grow in Unselfishness

II Cor. 5 [17]; Phil. 2 [5-8], 4 [8, 9]; James 1 [4]; John 8 [36].

Study in Jesus' life and teaching that particular trait in which you are weak (Heb. 4 [12]). Collect all the Scripture references and arrange them under heads, i.e. forms in which it manifests itself; what did Jesus teach about it? etc. Cultivate the habit when the selfish impulse comes, of stopping short before acting and picturing Jesus in the same situation (Matt. 28 [20]; John 14 [23]). Then act the way the picture tells you, praying for his help.

There is no sin, no matter how great or of how long standing it may be, which cannot be conquered by Jesus' help in this way, if one means business.

SEVENTH DAY—REVIEW

1. To what extent is the doctrine of non-resistance to be carried? Is Tolstoi's theory right?

2. Is war ever justifiable? the use of force in discipline?

3. Has a man a right to defend himself when attacked by a robber? Is he fighting for himself alone or for the community?

STUDY XIX

The Fourfold Touchstone—(d) The Fourth Test—Love

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God . . . . with all thy soul. Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." —*Mark 12: 30, 31.*

"This is my commandment, that ye love one another, even as I have loved you." —*John 15: 12.*

"Depart from me, ye cursed, into the eternal fire which is prepared for the devil and his angels: for I was hungry and ye did not give me to eat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink. I was a stranger, and ye took me not in; naked, and ye clothed me not; sick and in prison and ye visited me not. . . . . Inasmuch as ye did it not unto one of these least, ye did it not unto me." —*Matt. 25: 41-43, 45.*

"For this is the will of God . . . . concerning love of the brethren ye have no need that one write unto you." —*I Thess. 4: 3, 9.*

"And walk in love, even as Christ also loved you, and gave himself. . . . . Wherefore be ye not foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is." —*Eph. 5: 2, 17.*

"Set your mind on the things that are above . . . . and above all these things put on love." —*Col. 3: 2, 14.*

"But the wisdom that is from above is . . . . full of . . . . good fruits." —*James 3: 17.*

IS THE STEP WHICH I HAD PLANNED TO TAKE THE FULLEST POSSIBLE EXPRESSION OF MY LOVE, i.e. OF MY SELF IN SERVICE OF OTHERS? IF IT IS NOT IT CANNOT BE GOD'S WILL FOR MY LIFE.

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Study XIX. The Fourfold Touchstone. (d) The Fourth Test—Love

FIRST DAY

What Do We Mean by Love or Self-expression?

Matt. 25 [31-46]; Luke 10 [25-37]; Heb. 13 [16]; I Peter 4 [8-10]. John 13 [34], 21 [15-17]; I John 3 [16, 17].

"In the Book of Matthew, where the Judgment Day is depicted for us in the imagery of one seated upon a throne and dividing the sheep from the goats, the test of a man then is not, 'How have I believed?' but 'How have I loved?' The test of religion, the final test of religion, is not religiousness but love. I say the final test of religion at that great day is not religiousness but love; not what I have done, not what I have believed, not what I have achieved, but how I have discharged the common charities of life. Sins of commission in that awful indictment are not even referred to. By what we have not done, *by sins of omission,* we are judged. It could not be otherwise. For the withholding of love is the negation of the spirit of Christ, the proof that we never knew him, that for us he lived in vain. It means that he suggested nothing in all our thoughts, that he inspired nothing in all our lives, that we were not once near enough to him to be seized with the spell of his compassion for the world. It means that

> "'I lived for myself, I thought for myself,
> For myself and none beside—
> Just as if Jesus had never lived,
> As if he had never died.'

"It is the Son of *man* before whom the nations of the world shall be gathered. It is in the presence of humanity that we shall be charged. And the spectacle itself, the mere sight of it will silently judge each one. Those will be there whom we have met and helped; or there the unpitied multitude whom we neglected or despised. No other witness need be summoned. No other charge than lovelessness shall be pre-

ferred. Be not deceived. The words which all of us shall one day hear sound not of theology but of life, not of churches and saints, but of the hungry and the poor, not of creeds and doctrines, but of shelter and clothing, not of Bibles and prayer books, but of cups of cold water in the name of Christ. Thank God, the Christianity of today is coming nearer the world's need. Live to help that on."

DRUMMOND: *The Greatest Thing in the World, pages 61-64.*

If carried to its full meaning absolute love or self-expression would also include victory over every sin (Rom. 13 [8-10]). Love is full self-expression and an impure, dishonest or selfish man never expresses himself fully. Practically we limit love to the service of mankind. It is the active pouring out of self in contrast to unselfishness which is the hidden, passive mastery of self. "Have you ever noticed how much of Jesus' life was spent in doing kind things—in merely doing kind things?"

The fullest expression of love according to Jesus' standard (1) Does not mean working beyond one's powers all the time, taking up every task that comes along (Jesus took vacations); but it does mean doing those things which no one but you can do; e.g. if you receive a gift you are the only one who can express thanks for it. (2) Does not mean simply sentimental, pliable agreeableness. True love often acts with a sternness that hurts. (Love is not only kind—love rejoiceth not in unrighteousness, but rejoiceth in the truth.)

Study XIX. The Fourfold Touchstone. (d) The Fourth Test—Love

SECOND DAY

Subtle Forms of Repression of One's Best Self

Luke 7 [44-47], 17 [11-18].

Laziness.

Cowardice.

Not expressing thanks for gifts or favors (especially tuition scholarship in college).

Never telling your parents or friends—those in the intimate circle—how much you think of them (i.e. tell your mother that you love her and appreciate what she has deprived herself of for your sake).

Neglect of prayer and church attendance.

Neglect of duties as citizen—voting, protest, etc.

Refusal to help (not necessarily to give money to) beggars and tramps because they are probably fakes.

"It is easy to become suspicious of everything that calls itself charity, to harden the heart because we can point to endless cases where we have been imposed on. . . . . Benevolence may have often been abused, but worse than that is callous indifference to the calls on benevolence. A man who boasts of never having been taken in is advertising his own hardness of heart. Charity organization is dearly bought at the expense of the extinction of charity itself."

HUGH BLACK: *"The Paralysis of Criticism," Outlook, 17 March, 1906, page 607.*

Avoidance of marriage and children.

Neglect of correspondence with family or friends.

Study XIX. The Fourfold Touchstone. (d) The Fourth Test—Love

THIRD DAY

The Physical, Intellectual, Social and Spiritual Results of Self-repression

Matt. 25 (entire chapter).

Physical. [Isaiah 40 31]; John 4 31-34; I Peter 4 11 ("the strength which God supplieth"). A man misses the tenfold strength which is his birthright.

Intellectual. Matt. 25 26-28. "The same paradox is observed . . . . in intellectual achievements. . . . . The life that withheld itself was checked and dwarfed. The life that yielded itself was enriched and confirmed."

PEABODY: *Jesus Christ and the Christian Character, page 203.*

"I have said that in one respect my mind has changed during the last twenty or thirty years. . . . . I have tried lately to read Shakespeare and found it so intolerably dull that it nauseated me. I have also almost lost my taste for pictures and music. . . . . My mind seems to have become a kind of machine for grinding general laws out of a large collection of facts, but why this should have caused the atrophy of that part of the brain alone, on which the higher tastes depend, I cannot conceive. . . . . If I had to live my life again, I would have made a rule to read some poetry and listen to some music at least once every week; for perhaps the parts of my brain now atrophied would thus have been kept active through use. The loss of these tastes is a loss of happiness, and may possibly be injurious to the intellect, and more probably to the moral character by enfeebling the emotional part of our nature."

FRANCIS DARWIN: *Life and Letters of Charles Darwin, pages 81, 82.*

(Cf. also James' Psychology, Briefer Course, pages 147, 148.)

Social. Matt. 25 [28-30]. Separation from others.

Spiritual. Luke 16 [19-31]. A man misses the greatest joy in the world—the joy of service. III John 4.

"I wonder why it is that we are not all kinder than we are? How much the world needs it. How easily it is done. How instantaneously it acts. How infallibly it is remembered. How superabundantly it pays itself back."

DRUMMOND: *The Greatest Thing in the World, page 23.*

Study XIX. The Fourfold Touchstone. (d) The Fourth Test—Love

FOURTH DAY

The Love or Self-expression of Jesus

John 21 [25].

Speer. Principles of Jesus. Chapters XXXI., XXXII. —"Jesus and Love," "Jesus and Work."

Study XIX. The Fourfold Touchstone. (d) The Fourth Test—Love

FIFTH DAY

Is a Conflict Possible Between the Demands of Love (i. e. Service or Self-expression) and Those of Purity, Honesty and Unselfishness?

1. True love presupposes purity.

John 7 [53]—8 [11] (contrast the attitude of the pure Jesus and the impure Pharisees toward the woman in need of help). Matt. 7 [18] (end of verse), 12 [34]; I Peter 1 [22].

It is not true that men living in sin are sympathetic toward those who are worse off, and that pure and honest people are cold and unsympathetic. The one thing that gives a man great love and desire to help others is to have *won* his own struggle himself. Men living in sin are cruel. Many people who pretend to be pure are cruel, but it can be taken as an almost invariable rule that when a man is bitter and uncharitable against those who have fallen in sin that he is thereby striving to cover a sin of the same sort. (Rom. 2 [1]; Matt. 7 [1].)

2. True love presupposes honesty.

Rom. 12 [9]; I John 3 [18].

Discuss here the question of one man helping another to be dishonest in examination "out of love."

"Out of love!" What is love? A flabby, pliable agreeableness because you are a coward and are afraid that the other man will not like you if you object; or is it an affectionate concern for the future of your friend so faithful and true that it cuts you to the heart to think of such a damning trait as deception becoming rooted in him? Perhaps your kindly, loving refusal *explained fully with great gentleness afterwards* may be the turning point of his life. (2 Tim. 2 [24-26].) At the least he will love and admire you for it.

If you help him on in his career of deception and he later becomes a bank defaulter, who is in part responsible?

"By a change of divisions in the summer term, I came to sit next to Charlie Fielding, and was glad of the chance to become more intimate with him. But before long I began to think my privilege a doubtful one. For Charlie, although gifted with a keen mind and an extraordinary power of concentration, was loath to apply them to preparation for class work: instead, he would be constantly whispering to me, "What's this?" or "How do you do that?"—endeavoring in this way to keep far enough in advance of the reciter to avoid being flunked when called upon. To this practice I have always most strongly objected, not selfishly, but on grounds of self-respect. In school and in college there are those who seem to consider it an honor to have the more prominent men lean upon them in this way for support. But never, never, was popularity acquired by such sorry subserviency. Outside of class the great man notices not his friend in time of need, or if so, only to fleer him for a 'grind' or a 'greaser.' Much as I admired Charlie Fielding (who was by this time grown to something of a figure in the school world), I would not endure this unequal arrangement. So one day after recitation, I put the matter to him plainly. Perhaps his fault had been one more of thoughtlessness than of deliberate intent; for he immediately apologized most handsomely, and we parted with mutual respect. . . . . From this day forward our friendship progressed so rapidly, that shortly before the close of the term (when his present room-mate and mine would both graduate), we arranged to room together for the next year."

STRULY: *My Three Years at Andover, pages 59-61.*

3. True love presupposes unselfishness. I Cor. 13 [3].

"We see in this subject how it is that many persons are so abundantly active in religion with so little effect. . . . . Thus a man may be very active in warnings, exhortations, public prayers, plans of beneficence, contributions of time and money, and it may seem, when you look upon him, that he is going to produce immense effects by his life. But suppose him to be very much of a stranger to the patient virtues of Christ—railing at adversaries, blowing blasts of

scorn upon those whom he wishes to reform in their practices, impetuous, wilful, irritable, hot—how much good is that man going to do by all his activity? What can he do but irritate and vex, and, as far as he is concerned, render the very name of religion, or possibly of Christ himself, odious?"

BUSHNELL: *The New Life.*

Study XIX. The Fourfold Touchstone. (d) The Fourth Test—Love

SIXTH DAY

How to Attain to Love or Self-expression

I Peter 1 [22]; John 8 [36], 15 [12]; I John (entire book).

The surest means is by the daily study of the life and example of Jesus. We are to be finally judged not so much by the sins we have committed as by our sins of *omission.* Read each day in the Gospels until a kind act of Jesus suggests a similar one that you can and should do. Then shut the Bible up *at once and go out and do it,* before you read further.

Study XIX. The Fourfold Touchstone. (d) The Fourth Test—Love

SEVENTH DAY—REVIEW

1. How can a man know whether or not he is doing enough active Christian work?

2. Is it *ever* right to work beyond one's physical powers? to wreck one's health deliberately in service of others? e.g. Keith Falconer. Father Damien and lepers.

Yes, if you are the *only one* who can do the work. It is just as right to sacrifice one's life in this unpoetic but as truly heroic way as to die at the head of a charge of troops to save the nation.

3. Can love be commanded?

4. Does love require lovableness in its object?

D. THE ISSUES OF FACING THE PROBLEM OF DOING GOD'S WILL

Study XX. The Issues of Rejection and Disobedience.

Study XXI. The Issues of Obedience. (a) Knowledge.

Study XXII. The Issues of Obedience (continued). (b) Protection from Harm and Provision for all Needs.

Study XXIII. The Issues of Obedience (continued). (c) Assurance as to Duty and Power to Achieve Results.

Study XXIV. The Issues of Obedience (continued). (d) Constant Companionship.

Study XXV. The Issues of Obedience (concluded). (e) Eternal Life.

STUDY XX

The Issues of Rejection and Disobedience

"And that servant, who knew his lord's will, and made not ready, nor did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes." —*Luke 12:47.*

"But what think ye? A man had two sons; and he came to the first, and said, Son, go work today in the vineyard. And he answered and said, I will not: but afterward he repented himself, and went. And he came to the second, and said likewise. And he answered, and said, I go, sir; and went not. Which of the two did the will of his father? They say, The first. Jesus saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, that the publicans and harlots go into the kingdom of God before you." —*Matt. 21:28-31.*

"And Jesus looking upon him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest. . . . . But his countenance fell at the saying, and he went away sorrowful." —*Mark 10:21,22.*

"Destruction and misery are in their ways; and the way of peace have they not known." —*Rom. 3:16,17.*

"Every one that falleth on that stone shall be broken to pieces; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will scatter him as dust." —*Luke 20:18.*

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Study XX. The Issues of Rejection and Disobedience

FIRST DAY

What is Disobedience?

Eph. 4 [17-24]; Titus 3 [3]; Acts 7 [51].

Disobedience is a *deliberate, voluntary* transgression of purity, honesty, unselfishness or love; the *refusal* (not necessarily the failure) to obey one's conviction of the right.

"Things all serve their uses and never break out of their place. They have no power to do it. Not so with us. We are able as free beings to refuse the place and duties God appoints; which if we do we then sink into something lower and less worthy of us. That highest and best condition for which God designed us is no more possible. We are fallen out of it, and it cannot be wholly recovered."

BUSHNELL: *The New Life, page 14.*

"In the eternal counsels of his will when he arranged the destiny of every star . . . . the Creator had a thought for you and me. . . . . But we all had the terrible power to evade this thought, and shape our lives from another thought, from another will if we chose. The bud could only become a flower, and the star revolve in the orbit God had fixed. But it was man's prerogative to choose his path, his duty to choose it in God. But the divine right to choose at all has always seemed more to him than his duty to choose in God, so for the most part he has taken his life *from* God and cut out his career from himself."

DRUMMOND: *The Ideal Life, page 305.*

Study XX. The Issues of Rejection and Disobedience

SECOND DAY

Honest Ignorance, Honest Openmindedness, Defiant Refusal to Obey, Indecision and Wilful Ignorance

Honest *ignorance* is not disobedience—Jesus freely forgives those who sin through ignorance (Luke 23 [34]). Cf. the case of Paul (Acts 26 [9, 19]).

Honest *openmindedness* and refusal to act until convinced is not disobedience. Jesus never forces a man against his frank, although perhaps mistaken, convictions; he invites honest, searching investigation of his claims. (John 1 [39], 20 [24-29].)

Defiant *refusal to obey* is disobedience but it is the most hopeful form (Matt. 21 [28-29]). A defiant rebel against God often makes the most devoted subject if he can be brought to see his error.

Indecision, apathy, or disobedience-become-a-habit, is the subtlest and most dangerous form of disobedience (Matt. 21 [30, 31]). While good and often necessary in intellectual matters it is never right in a question of conscience. It is a form of disobedience which blinds and deafens (John 8 [43], 12 [36-43]). Jesus' energies were often directed against this most alarming form of sleeping sickness of the soul.

Wilful ignorance (2 Peter 3 [5, 16]), the refusal to learn, is the atrophy of the soul.

Study XX. The Issues of Rejection and Disobedience

THIRD DAY

The Testimony of Psychology to the Results of Disobedience, Especially in the Form of Indecision

James 2 [19, 20].

"No matter how full a reservoir of maxims one may possess, and no matter how good one's sentiments may be, if one have not taken advantage of every concrete opportunity to act, one's character may remain entirely unaffected for the better. With mere good intentions hell is proverbially paved. And this is an obvious consequence of the principles we have laid down. A 'character,' as J. S. Mill says, 'is a completely fashioned will'; and a will, in the sense in which he means it, is an aggregate of tendencies to act in a firm and prompt and definite way upon all the principal emergencies of life. A tendency to act only becomes effectively ingrained in us in proportion to the uninterrupted frequency with which the actions actually occur and the brain 'grows' to their use. When a resolve or a fine glow of feeling is allowed to evaporate without bearing practical fruit it is worse than a chance lost; it works so as positively to hinder future resolutions and emotions from taking the normal path of discharge. There is no more contemptible type of character than that of the nerveless sentimentalist and dreamer who spends his life in a weltering sea of sensibility and emotion but who never does a manly, concrete deed. Rousseau, inflaming all the mothers of France by his eloquence to follow nature and nurse their babies themselves, while he sends his own children to the foundling hospital, is the classical example of what I mean. But every one of us in his measure, whenever, after glowing for an abstractly formulated good, he practically ignores some actual case among the squalid 'other particulars' of which that same good lurks disguised, treads straight on Rousseau's path. All goods are disguised by the vulgarity of their concomitants in this work-a-day world, but *woe to him*

who can only recognize them in their pure and abstract form. The habit of excessive novel-reading and theatre-going will produce true monsters in this line. The weeping of the Russian lady over the fictitious personages in the play while her coachman is freezing to death on his seat outside is the sort of thing that everywhere happens on a less glowing scale. Even the habit of excessive indulgence in music for those who are neither performers themselves nor musically gifted enough to take it in a purely intellectual way has probably a relaxing effect upon the character. One becomes filled with emotions which habitually pass without prompting to any deed and so the inertly sentimental condition is kept up. The remedy would be never to suffer one's self to have an emotion at a concert, without expressing it afterward in *some* active way. Let the expression be the least thing in the world—speaking genially to one's grandmother, or giving up one's seat in a horse-car if nothing more heroic offers—but let it not fail to take place."

JAMES: *Psychology, Briefer Course, pages 147, 148.*

Study XX. The Issues of Rejection and Disobedience

FOURTH DAY

The Certainty of Failure of a Disobedient Life

Rom. 3 [17]; Col. 3 [6]; Mark 10 [22], 12 [1-9], 14 [21]; Matt. 6 [23], 18 [7], 19 [22], 23 [37, 38]; Luke 3 [9], 6 [49], 12 [20, 21, 47], 14 [33-35], 19 [27]; Acts 13 [46]; Heb. 2 [2].

"Seek the kingdom of God *first.* I promise you but a miserable existence if you seek it second."

DRUMMOND.

"Do I hear thy soul confessing, with a suppressed sob within thee, that, up to this time, thou hast never sought God's chosen plan at all? Hast thou, even to this hour and during so many years, been following a way and a plan of thine own, regardless hitherto of all God's purposes in thee? Well, if it be so what hast thou gotten? How does thy plan work? Does it bring thee peace, content, dignity of aim and feeling, purity, rest; or does it plunge thee into mires of disturbance, scorch thee in flames of passion, worry thee with cares, burden thee with bitter reflections, cross thee, disappoint, sadden, sour thee? And what are thy prospects? What is the issue to come? After thou hast worked out this hard plan of thine own, will it come to a good end? Hast thou courage now to go on and work it through?"

BUSHNELL: *The New Life, page 24.*

"Whole years, possibly many years of that great and blessed biography which God designed for you, occupied by a frivolous and foolish invention of your own, substituted for the good counsel of God's infinite wisdom and love."

BUSHNELL: *Ibid., page 25.*

"Life stripped to its essentials offers but two alternatives to the man of action. He may work for himself alone, building his little selfish walls across the advancing path of civilization and making them stumbling blocks in the way of

progress. Then however successful he may be, ultimately the stern mills of the gods will grind him and his structures to dust and he and his work will vanish from the earth. Or having the eyes that see, he may place his effort parallel with those eternal lines of force that mark the purposes of God and then what he builds will endure."

H. K. Smith.

"All men living without God are adventurers out upon God's world, in neglect of him, to choose their own course. Hence the sorrowful sad-looking host they make. Oh, that I could show them whence their bitterness, their dryness, their unutterable sorrows come. Oh, that I could silence, for one hour, the noisy tumult of their works, and get them to look in upon that better, higher life of fruitfulness and blessing to which their God has appointed them."

Bushnell: *Ibid., page 26.*

"All these centuries the human animal has fought with the human soul. And step by step the soul has registered her victories. She has won them only by feeling for the law and finding it—uncovering, bringing into light, the firm rocks beneath her feet. And on these rocks she rears her landmarks—marriage, the family, the State, the Church. Neglect them, and you sink into the quagmire from which the soul of the race has been for generations struggling to save you. Dispute them! overthrow them,—yes, if you can! You have about as much chance with them as you have with the other facts and laws amid which you live—physical, or chemical, or biological."

Ancrum to David Grieve. (Quoted Powell: *Christian Science, page 129.*)

Study XX. The Issues of Rejection and Disobedience

FIFTH DAY

No Disobedience so Great that it Cannot be Rectified before God by a Single Act of the Human Will

Luke 23 [39-43]; John 6 [37], 7 [37, 53]—8 [11].

The "unpardonable sin" can be committed only by the man who *won't* be saved. It is unpardonable, not because God is not ready to pardon but simply and solely because the man *won't* let himself be pardoned. There are two parts to salvation, God's part and man's part. God is *always* ready, but he cannot act without man's permission, man's free will.

"For the Spirit of God lies all about the spirit of man like a mighty sea, ready to rush in at the smallest chink in the walls that shut him out from his own."

MACDONALD: *Robert Falconer, page 209.*

Study XX. The Issues of Rejection and Disobedience

SIXTH DAY

Why not, then, Sow One's Wild Oats? Although Completely Rectified Spiritually, all Disobedience must be Atoned for Physically, Mentally and Socially, and When Man has once Disobeyed, only "the Next Best Plan" is Thereafter Possible. He can never be what he Might Have Been, Had he not Disobeyed, yet God has an Honorable Part though not so Great a One for him in His Plan Still

Gal. 6 [7, 8]; Rom. 6 [21-23], 11 [23].

God forgives and rectifies the spiritual results of sin in the individual if he repents, and that is the main thing; but physically, intellectually and socially a man must reap what he has sown. In these three realms a man can never be again what he might have been; for even if he restores his body, for example, to its state at the time he fell, we must remember that this same body might have developed a tenfold greater strength in the interval had the means necessary for its restoration been devoted to its further development from the first with no lapse.

"And yet, as that was the best thing possible for us in the reach of God's original counsel, so there is a place designed for us now which is the next best possible. God calls us now to the best thing left, and will do so until all good possibility is narrowed down and spent."

BUSHNELL: *The New Life, pages 14, 15.*

"And what shall I say to the older man, who is further on in his course and is still without God in the world? The beginning of wisdom, my friend, you have still to learn. You have really done nothing as yet that you were sent into the world to do. All your best opportunities, too, are gone or going by. The best end, the next best, and the next are gone and nothing but the dregs of opportunity are left. And

still Christ calls even you. There is a place still left for you; not the best and brightest but an humble and good one. To this you are called. For this you are apprehended of Christ Jesus still."

BUSHNELL: *Ibid., pages 25, 26.*

Study XX. The Issues of Rejection and Disobedience

SEVENTH DAY—REVIEW

1. In how far are Jesus' figures of punishment for disobedience to be taken literally? e.g. "Beaten with many stripes." "Cast forth into outer darkness."

2. In most of the parables is the penalty of exclusion in outer darkness pronounced upon those guilty of sins of omission or of commission?

STUDY XXI

The Issues of Obedience—A. Knowledge

"Jesus therefore answered them, and said, My teaching is not mine, but his that sent me. If any man willeth to do his will, he shall know of the teaching, whether it is of God, or whether I speak from myself." —*John 7:16, 17.*

"I can of myself do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is righteous; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of him that sent me." —*John 5:30.*

"And when they bring you before the synagogues, and the rulers, and the authorities, be not anxious how or what ye shall answer, or what ye shall say: for the Holy Spirit shall teach you in that very hour what ye ought to say." —*Luke 12:11, 12.*

"But the Comforter, even the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said unto you." —*John 14:26.*

"For I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to withstand or to gainsay."—*Luke 21:15.*

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Study XXI. The Issues of Obedience. (a) Knowledge

FIRST DAY

The Mental Power and Insight of Jesus

Col. 2 [2, 3]; Matt. 7 [28, 29], 22 [46]; Luke 2 [47]; John 2 [25], 7 [14, 15].

See *Peabody,* Jesus Christ and the Christian Character, Chapter II., pages 56-64.

What weapons of the scholar did Jesus use?

Cite instances of his deep insight and ability to get at the essential point on which the issue was to be determined.

Was Jesus a critic? Was his mind scientific?

Contrast the mind of Jesus with that of Paul.

On what occasions did Jesus make use of playfulness as a weapon of reasoning?

"Here is intellectual insight matching spiritual authority. This is no recluse or peasant or passive saint, but an intellectual as well as moral leader, who may be rejected indeed, but who cannot be despised."

PEABODY: *Ibid., pages 63, 64.*

"One of the strongest pieces of objective evidence in favor of Christianity is not sufficiently enforced by apologists. Indeed, I am not aware that I have ever seen it mentioned. It is the absence from the biography of Christ of any doctrines which the subsequent growth of human knowledge—whether in natural science, ethics, political economy, or elsewhere—has had to discount."

ROMANES: *Thoughts on Religion, page 167.*

Study XXI. The Issues of Obedience. (a) Knowledge

SECOND DAY

The Infinite Capacity and Possibilities of the Human Mind

[Ps. 139 [14].]

"The human mind is the brightest display of the power and skill of the infinite mind with which we are acquainted. It is created and placed in this world for a higher state of existence. Here its faculties begin to unfold and those mighty energies which are to bear it forward to unending ages, begin to discover themselves. . . . . [Some imagine that it is] dangerous to task the mind too often lest her stores be exhausted or her faculties become weakened. . . . . But you need have no such fears; you may call upon your mind today for its highest efforts and stretch it to the utmost in your power and you have done yourself a kindness. The mind will be all the better for it. Tomorrow you may do it again and each time it will answer more readily to your calls."

TODD: *The Student's Manual, pages 13, 36, 37.*

"If we take, for example, the faculty of memory, how very obvious it is that as we pass eternally on we shall have more and more to remember and finally shall have gathered more into the great storehouse of the soul than is now contained in all the libraries of the world. And there is not one of our faculties that has not, in its volume, a similar power of expansion."

BUSHNELL: *The New Life, pages 310, 311.*

Study XXI. The Issues of Obedience. (a) Knowledge

THIRD DAY

Is Genius Chance, Inheritance or Character?

Col. 2 [2, 3].

"Genius is nine parts character; the prize is to him who dares, not merely to him who can; the supreme desideratum is self-fulfilment."

R. L. Hartt: *Atlantic Monthly, Vol. LXXXIII., 1899, page 717.*

Is genius chance? The principle of evolution teaches us plainly that it never can be. It may appear suddenly and apparently unaccountably in an unexpected place, but this must be either inheritance appearing after several generations or the result of characteristics acquired by the man himself in his environment.

Is genius inheritance? Often. But inherited what? Inherited character. Some one else up the line has wrought and labored (John 4 [38]) and hammered out a character, and the gifted man is the one who has entered into this labor by inheritance, even if he has not labored himself. I am confident that we shall some day be able to show how the gifted man derived the genius from a blend of the patient characters hammered out by his ancestors, with his own.

Is genius then character? In the final analysis, always—either one's own acquisition or inherited. A man with a long line of ancestors of character from whom to inherit naturally starts higher up in the scale at the beginning, but it is possible for any man to make marvelous intellectual advances by his own advance in character if he will only obey. We can at least hammer out, each one of us, in his own life one of the strands which some descendant will unite with others and thus make the blend for genius in his life. What form the genius will take, we do not of course know at the start. All men cannot be musical geniuses. But every man has in him or can

acquire the capacity to reveal to the world some mighty eternal truth of science or humanity. Every human life was intended to be some thought of God incarnate. The question is, Will we let him express it?

Study XXI. The Issues of Obedience. (a) Knowledge

FOURTH DAY

The Relation of Obedience to Intuition and Mental Growth

[Dan. 12 [10]]; I Cor. 1 [5-7]; Col. 1 [9]; Luke 2 [47, 49], 21 [15]; Acts 6 [10]; James 1 [5-8].

I Peter 4 [11]; John 3 [34], 5 [30], 7 [17]; I John 2 [20, 27]; II Peter 1 [21].

"It follows in the same manner that there is no genuine character, no proper education which does not include religion. Much indeed of what is called education is only a power of deformity, a stimulus of overgrowth in the lower functions of the spirit, as a creature of intelligence which overlooks and leaves to wither, causes to wither, all the metropolitan powers of a great mind and character. The first light of the mind is God, the only genuine heat is religion, imaginative insight is kindled only by the fervors of holy truth, all noblest breadth and volume are infolded in the regal amplitude of God's eternity and kingdom, all grandest energy and force in the impulsions of duty and the inspirations of faith. All training, separated from these, operates even a shortening of faculty as truly as an increase. It is a kind of gymnastic for the arm that paralyzes the spine. It diminishes the quantity of the subject where all sovereign quantity begins and increases it only in some lower point, where it ends; as if building the trunk of a lighthouse staunch and tall were enough without preparing any light and revolving clock for the top. Hence it is that many scholars, most bent down upon their tasks and digging most intently into the supposed excellence, turn out, after all, to be so miserably diminished in all that constitutes power. Hence also that men of taste are so often attenuated by their refinements and dwarfed by the overgrown accuracy and polish of their attainments. No man is ever educated in due form, save as being a man; that is, a creature related to God, and having

all his highest summits of capacity unfolded by the great thoughts, and greater sentiments and nobler inspirations of religion."

BUSHNELL: *The New Life, page 181.*

"He [Jesus] never taught that the cultivation of the understanding would do all but exactly the reverse. And so taught his apostles. St. Paul taught 'The world by wisdom knew not God.' His Master said, not that clear intellect will give you a right life, but that a right heart and a pure life will clarify the intellect. Not, become a man of letters and learning and you will attain spiritual freedom; but do rightly and you will judge justly; obey and you will know."

ROBERTSON: *Sermons, Second Series, No. VII.* "Obedience the Organ of Spiritual Knowledge."

Study XXI. The Issues of Obedience. (a) Knowledge

FIFTH DAY

The Marvelous Growth in Knowledge Possible to any Man Who Obeys God's Will

John 8 [31-34].

Why should not obedience free the mind for larger things? Does sin ever help to make a man more of a genius, more brilliant intellectually? If so let us know what particular form is helpful and all cultivate it assiduously. Let us at once establish professorships of the particular form of sin which leads to genius in our schools and universities. Does impurity develop memory or imagination or taste and delicacy of perception? Does dishonesty improve the power of impartial judgment, or does selfishness help breadth of vision? Does repression of one's sympathies—one's best self—help power of observation or insight? Wherein does greatness in literature and life lie if not in just those traits which are the issues of purity of mind, honesty of judgment, unselfishness of heart and pouring forth of soul?

Study XXI. The Issues of Obedience. (a) Knowledge

SIXTH DAY

"If any Man Willeth to do His Will, he Shall Know"

John 7 [17], 16 [13].

If God is perfect knowledge (Prov. 2 [6]) and if sin clogs the channel of our intercourse with him is it unreasonable to suppose that if a man could clear his mind of the sensual, remove the screens which deception, prejudice, anger, and selfishness rear between him and truth, and awaken the torpor of the soul; is it unreasonable to suppose that under such conditions revelations of higher truth—which are the marks of true genius—might come to him as we are told that they came to the prophets, to Jesus and the Apostles of old? At least is it unreasonable to hold that they are more liable to come to such a man than if his receiving instrument is clogged and choked? Such a way of arriving at the truth does not minimize the intellectual. It requires hard work of the mind and of the will as well.

"Science seems to me to teach in the highest and strongest manner the great truth which is embodied in the Christian conception of entire surrender to the will of God. Sit down before fact as a little child, be prepared to give up every preconceived notion, follow humbly wherever and to whatever abysses nature leads or you shall learn nothing."

HUXLEY: *Life and Letters, Vol. I, page 235.*

"Masaccio can by no means be taken as a fair instance of the painters of his age. Gifted with exceptional powers he overleaped the difficulties of his art, and arrived intuitively at results whereof as yet no scientific certainty had been secured. His contemporaries applied humbler talents to severe study and wrought out by patient industry those principles which Masaccio had divined."

SYMONDS: *Renaissance in Italy. III.—The Fine Arts, page 231.*

"But his [Drummond's] discoveries were always derived from intuition rather than from reason, and although we can only speak from the lay point of view, we may suggest that evolutionists may in time, by laborious work, reach the point which Drummond attained without being well able to say how he got there."

LENNOX: *Practical Life Work of Henry Drummond, page 172.*

SEVENTH DAY—REVIEW

1. Is true vision from God ever possible without an act of the human will and earnest work to realize it?

STUDY XXII

The Issues of Obedience (continued)—B. Protection from Harm and Provision for All Needs

"And I say unto you my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I warn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, who after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him. Are not five sparrows sold for two pence? and not one of them is forgotten in the sight of God. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not: ye are of more value than many sparrows." —*Luke 12:4-7.*

"But seek ye first his kingdom, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." —*Matt. 6:33.*

"Jesus answered him, Thou wouldest have no power against me except it were given thee from above." —*John 19:11.*

"Or those eighteen, upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and killed them, think ye that they were offenders above all the men that dwell in Jerusalem? I tell you, Nay: but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." —*Luke 13:4, 5.*

"For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall both live, and do this or that." —*James 4:15.*

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Study XXII. The Issues of Obedience. (b) Protection and Provision

FIRST DAY

The Indifference of Jesus to Earthly Privations, Opposition and Physical Danger

Mark 4 [35-41]; Matt. 6 [19-34]; Luke 4 [29, 30], 13 [31-33]; John 7 [6-9], 11 [8, 9], 12 [33], 13 [1], 17 [1].

See *Speer,* The Man Christ Jesus, pages 53-57, 62-67, 94-99.

What was the attitude of Jesus toward opposition? misrepresentation? popular opinion?

Did he disregard the formal conditions of success?

On what supposition only can this be explained?

Did he ever alter plans or purposes?

What was his attitude toward his own death?

Study XXII. The Issues of Obedience. (b) Protection and Provision

SECOND DAY

No Life That Stands for any Real Principle can Expect to Escape Privation, Opposition and often Physical Peril in This Life

Phil. 1 [29]; Matt. 5 [11, 12], 10 [22], 24 [9]; Acts 20 [19, 22-24]. Heb. 2 [10], 10 [32-39], 13 [12]; I Peter 3 [17], 4 [14]; Rev. 7 [13-17]; John 7 [7].

No true man can expect to pass through the world without encountering privation, opposition and often physical peril for the sake of principle. Jesus told his disciples, "Woe unto you when all men shall speak well of you," and the apostolic teaching reiterated the same idea when it asserted that as many as live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. Reproduction and growth are only possible in the physical world through sacrifice and suffering. The same principle holds true in the mental, social and spiritual realms. We have, of course, no right to deliberately court privation, opposition and physical peril when no essential principle is at stake (Acts 21 [17-26]). We are to remember, too, that these things are a part of the world order and come to Christians and non-Christians alike, and that they are only unendurable when one has to endure them alone without God's help. As a part of his plan, these things are a benediction and a joy (Matt. 5 [11, 12]).

Study XXII. The Issues of Obedience. (b) Protection and Provision

THIRD DAY

What are Privation, Suffering and Death?

John 13—17.

See *Charles Cuthbert Hall,* Does God Send Trouble?
See *Lyman Abbott,* The Other Room.
See *Robert E. Speer,* Marks of a Man, page 34.

Read through these chapters of John and collect all the phrases Jesus uses for his approaching death, and then study Jesus' idea of death.

"On either hand [of life] we behold a birth, of which, as of the moon, we see but half. We are outside the one, waiting for a life from the unknown; we are inside the other, watching the departure of a spirit from the womb of the world into the unknown. To the region whither he goes, the man enters newly born. We forget that it is a birth, and call it a death. The body he leaves behind is but the *placenta* by which he drew his nourishment from his mother Earth. And as the childbed is watched on earth with anxious expectancy, so the couch of the dying, as we call them, may be surrounded by the birth-watchers of the other world, waiting like anxious servants to open the door to which this world is but the wind-blown porch."

MACDONALD: *Robert Falconer, page 388.*

Study XXII. The Issues of Obedience. (b) Protection and Provision

FOURTH DAY

God's Promise of Provision for Our Needs and of Protection from Harm does not Exclude Privation, Suffering or Death if His Plan for the World Requires such Sacrifice on Our Part. But He Promises Us that if We Entrust Our Lives Unreservedly to Him, such Things Will Only Come to Us as a Part of His Plan and that We Shall be Amply Provided for and Protected in the Path of Obedience in all Other Instances

I Thess. 3 [3]; I Cor. 4 [9]; II Cor. 4 [11]; Rom. 8 [28], 14 [8]; Phil. 1 [12, 13].

II Tim. 3 [10-12], 4 [6, 17, 18]; Luke 10 [19]; Acts 18 [9, 10], 22 [17, 18].

Heb. 11 [32-36], 13 [5, 6]; I Peter 4 [19]; John 10 [29].

God's dispensations of provision for needs and protection are not to all men. He does not force even these upon men unless they wish to have them (Luke 13 [1-5]). It is not true that all things work together for good for all men. Paul never said that. He said that *to them that love God* all things work together for good, even *to them that are called according to his purpose.* If a man prefers to live his own life alone, apart from God, God grants him the same opportunities from which to make a happy life as he grants his own followers (Matt. 5 [45]). If, however, man allows God to direct his life unreservedly there is another element which enters in. "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them and they follow me. . . . . My Father, who hath given them unto me, is greater than all and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. . . . . Thou wouldst have no power against me, except it were given thee from above."

Study XXII. The Issues of Obedience. (b) Protection and Provision

FIFTH DAY

The Relation of Obedience to Escape from Peril and Provision for Our Needs

II Cor. 1 [8-11]; Mark 10 [28-31]; Luke 13 [1-9]; Acts 22 [17-21]. II Tim. 4 [18].

When a man surrenders his life unconditionally to God he, for the first time, makes it possible for God to provide for his needs or save him from possible peril, if such be God's will, inasmuch as provision and protection not only presuppose the act of the giver but also acceptance by the receiver. Since God forces no man against his will, before the dedication of lives to him there is no assurance that the individual will let God act in a given case—the channel of communication being now open, now closed. After the dedication the truly surrendered man has made a contract with God to be *always* pure, *always* honest, *always* unselfish, *always* loving in deeds of self-expression; he may fail now and then, but he corrects his mistake as soon as he realizes it and presses on, so the channel is always open. Through compelling convictions of purity, honesty, unselfishness or service, which his vow requires him to translate at once into action, he can now be led into fields of provision and out of paths of danger. Jesus teaches plainly several truths regarding this great subject in Luke 13 [1-9]. (1) Accidents and calamities are not visitations of divine justice to punish sinners. (2) When a building falls it falls alike upon the morally good and the morally bad who are under it. (3) But if a man has put himself in God's hands, God makes provision that he shall not be in that building unless the plan of God required his sacrifice there (John 19 [11]).

What I mean is this. If a building is about to fall as a sure consequence of the great invariable laws of nature which God created and which he knows, he can detain me from going under it as I might naturally have done through some appeal

to my purity, honesty, unselfishness or love, which coming as an interruption halts or detains me before I reach the place. If God can always count on what I will do at any moment, why cannot he lead me into any fields of provision or out of any path of danger at any time, perhaps even unconsciously on my part? Is not the variableness of the human will the only thing that stands in the way of a rational system of provision and protection, once granted that God can communicate with men?

I like to continue in fancy the story of the Good Samaritan. I like to think that after the robbers had finished with their victim and left him by the roadside they went on a few miles and lay in wait for other travelers. The priest and the Levite came by, and the warning from God that would have saved them from the possibility of peril in the shape of the appeal to their unselfishness and love to help the injured man and take him back to the inn was unheeded. They went on and were robbed. But the Samaritan turned aside at the appeal to his unselfishness—the compelling conviction that he ought to stop and help. Thus he was saved from the trap laid for him though he never knew that danger lurked ahead.

Study XXII. The Issues of Obedience. (b) Protection and Provision

SIXTH DAY

"Fear Not, Ye are of More Value than Many Sparrows"

Mark 6 [8, 9].

Why, then, should we ever be worried or afraid in the path of obedience? May it not be, nay, must it not be that a path is prepared for each one of us through life where every necessary provision is made for our needs, where harm absolutely cannot enter if we will but walk in it—a charmed life, if you will—as long as God wishes it to last?

"When I went to Europe thirty years ago for a two years' absence and left you a little fellow of three months with your mother, I never felt any anxiety about myself or my family, for it seemed to me a part of God's plan for me and mine. And I knew He would care for us. So I feel now about you and yours."

A Father's Steamer Letter, August 27, '07.

"But why fear at all? If we keep spending ourselves for the general good, fear has no place. God will take care not to lose his partner."

PATTON: *New Basis of Civilization.*

Study XXII. The Issues of Obedience. (b) Protection and Provision

SEVENTH DAY—REVIEW

1. What is the fundamental difference between Jesus' doctrine of protection and fatalism?

2. Which recognizes a human side to the question—an act of will?

3. If you like Paul were to be put in prison unjustly, in the prime of life, as he was in Cæsarea, would you doubt God's fairness and goodness?

STUDY XXIII

The Issues of Obedience—C. Assurance as to One's Duty and Power to Achieve Results

"He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go to the Father." —*John 14: 12.*

"And this is the boldness which we have toward him, that, if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us." —*I John 5: 14.*

"So then, my beloved, even as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who worketh in you both to will and to work, for his good pleasure." —*Phil. 2: 12, 13.*

"God also bearing witness with them, both by signs and wonders, and by manifold powers, and by gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to his own will." —*Heb. 2: 4.*

"If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatsoever ye will, and it shall be done unto you." —*John 15: 7.*

"For as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the one shall the many be made righteous." —*Rom. 5: 19.*

"And such confidence have we through Christ to God-ward: not that we are sufficient of ourselves: . . . . but our sufficiency is from God." —*II Cor. 3: 4, 5.*

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Study XXIII. The Issues of Obedience. (c) Assurance and Power

FIRST DAY

The Unfaltering Assurance and Mighty Achievements of Jesus

Gal. 1 [3, 4]; Matt. 26 [53]; Luke 4 [36], 9 [51], 20 [2].
John 4 [32, 34], 5 [17, 20, 36], 8 [14].

See *Speer,* The Man Christ Jesus, pages 28-40.

With what social disadvantages did Jesus enter upon his work?

What social conventions did he dare to disregard?

In what way were his plans revolutionary?

Did he finish his work?

What social and political changes in history can be traced to his influence?

Study XXIII. The Issues of Obedience. (c) Assurance and Power

SECOND DAY

Assurance and Sure Conviction as to Duty, the Prerequisites for all Great Achievements, Possible to Those Who Obey

I Thess. 1 [4, 5]; I Cor. 1 [1]; Col. 4 [12]; Eph. 3 [12]; Matt. 18 [14]; Acts 4 [13].

The one essential for all successful work is conviction that a man is in the right place. Just as surely as one doubts or distrusts his mission his work fails. This assurance was the secret of Paul's mighty achievements (I Cor. 1 [1]; Gal. 1 [15, 16]). It is the key to Jesus' life (Luke 19 [10]; Matt. 18 [14]). Both were lives with a definite purpose. Only when a man knows that he is in his work called of God can he successfully overcome the difficulties and face the disappointments that always accompany a great task. If a man is God's representative and knows that he is obeying orders he dares go ahead since the responsibility for the result lies not with him but with God.

Study XXIII. The Issues of Obedience. (c) Assurance and Power

THIRD DAY

The Infinite Possibilities of Achievement of Which Man is Capable

Rev. 14 [13].

"Only a few years ago he [man] lay in his cradle, a barely breathing principle of life. . . . . He conquers now the sea and its storms. He climbs the heavens and searches out the mysteries of the stars. He harnesses the lightning. He bids the rocks dissolve and summons the secret atoms to give up their names and laws. He subdues the face of the world and compels the forces of the waters and the fires to be his servants. He makes laws, hurls empires down upon empires in the fields of war, speaks words that cannot die, sings to distant realms and peoples across vast ages of time: in a word, he executes all that is included in history, showing his tremendous energy in almost everything that stirs the silence and changes the conditions of the world. Everything is transformed by him even up to the stars. Not all the winds and storms and earthquakes and seas and seasons of the world have done so much to revolutionize the world as he, the power of an endless life, has done since the day he came forth upon it and received, as he is most truly declared to have done, dominion over it. . . . . And yet we have in the power thus developed, nothing more than a mere hint or initial sign of what is to be the real stature of his personality in the process of his everlasting development."

BUSHNELL: *The New Life, pages 309, 310.*

Study XXIII. The Issues of Obedience. (c) Assurance and Power

FOURTH DAY

"The Strength Which God Supplieth"

[Isaiah 40 28-31]; II Cor. 5 17; Eph. 1 17, 18, 19; Phil. 4 13, 19.

I Tim. 1 12; II Tim. 1 7; Matt. 4 4; Luke 1 49.

Acts 1 8, 26 22; I Peter 4 11; John 4 32-34.

Spend this day's study on a careful consideration of all the Scripture passages given above. How does this strength make itself felt and what is its source? To what extent may it be called upon?

Study XXIII. The Issues of Obedience. (c) Assurance and Power

FIFTH DAY

The Relation of Obedience to Assurance and Achievement

[Lev. 26 [3, 8]]; II Cor. 12 [9, 10], 13 [8]; Rom. 5 [19]; Col. 1 [29]; Mark 9 [23], 10 [29, 30], 11 [23]; Matt. 21 [21, 22]; Luke 6 [47-49]. John 15 [5]; I John 4 [17, 18], 5 [4].

"The world has yet to see what God can accomplish through a man who will give himself up wholly to His will."

"He that hath clean hands shall wax stronger and stronger."

In an actual physical contest the bully with big muscles and a knowledge that he is in the wrong is no match for the man with average muscles and truth on his side.

"They therefore can who will what ought to be."

LEONARDO DA VINCI.

"The ordinary man who wills to have a mind freed from the shackles of impure imagery, an eye that looks at things squarely and brooks deception neither of self nor of others, a hand that will not spare itself in work, and a heart that will express without reserve its honest convictions and genuine affections, will often even in this earthly life outstrip the brilliant genius, who though starting far ahead in the race because of inherited gifts, is shackled and ultimately overthrown by impurity, dishonesty, selfishness or atrophy of heart. And who can doubt the ultimate result when we enter upon real living when these days of preparations and layings of foundations are over."

A Life with a Purpose, pages 24, 25.

Study XXIII. The Issues of Obedience. (c) Assurance and Power

SIXTH DAY

"He (i. e. any Man) That Believeth in Me . . . . . Greater Works than These Shall He Do"

John 14 [12].

What are the limits of the work I might accomplish in this brief life if I could lay hold on the strength which God supplieth? Is it possible that God has a plan already prepared, conditional only upon my acceptance of it, to use me, weak as I am, for some mighty task here or to prepare me for some mightier service in the next world?

"We may not be able today to think Plato's thought, create Shakespeare's Hamlet or live with the moral sublimity of Lincoln, but give us eternity and infinite opportunity and there is no limit to our possible growth in these directions."

GRIGGS: *Moral Education, page 23.*

SEVENTH DAY—REVIEW

1. What is finished work?
2. Is it to be judged by quality or quantity?
3. Has a young man who dies at the age of seventeen finished his work?
4. Is any work finished, no matter how complete it may be, that is not pure, honest, unselfish or the fullest expression of one's self?

STUDY XXIV

The Issues of Obedience—D. Constant Companionship

"For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother." —*Mark 3:35.*

"If a man love me, he will keep my word: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." —*John 14:23.*

"But as many as received him, to them gave he the right to become children of God, even to them that believe on his name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." —*John 1:12,13.*

"The friendship of Jehovah is with them that fear him; and he will shew them his covenant." —*Psalm 25:14.*

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Study XXIV. The Issues of Obedience. (d) Constant Companionship

FIRST DAY

The Constant Fellowship of Jesus with God

John 5 [20], 8 [16, 29, 54, 55], 10 [30, 38], 16 [32].

See *Speer,* Principles of Jesus, Chapter I.—"Jesus and the Father."

What names does Jesus use for God?

Was his fellowship with God real? On what occasions did he address him as a person? Was he ever without the sense of God's presence?

Study XXIV. The Issues of Obedience. (d) Constant Companionship

SECOND DAY

Man is a Social Being Who can only Exist in Society

Mark 15 [34]; Luke 23 [46].

"The next thing that the ideal man needs is society. Man is not made to be alone. He needs friendships. Without society the ideal man would be a monster, a contradiction. You must give him friendship. Now whom will you give him?"

DRUMMOND: *The Ideal Life, page 234.*

"No statements about God can satisfy the soul in this its quest after God. Nothing can take the place of the personal finding of him; personal communion with him; personal friendship with him. . . . . Nothing can satisfy the quest after God except God himself. We must come to know him as Abraham knew him, as David knew him, as Isaiah knew him, as Paul knew him, or our quest will never be satisfied. 'O that I knew where I might find him!' is the cry of humanity, and only God himself can satisfy it."

ABBOTT: *The Great Companion, pages 24, 26.*

Study XXIV. The Issues of Obedience. (d) Constant Companionship

THIRD DAY

Loneliness or Isolation Impossible to the Surrendered Life even though it be Deserted by all Earthly Friends

II Cor. 4 [9, 16-18]; Rom. 8 [38, 39]; II Tim. 4 [16, 17]; Mark 6 [48]. John 14 [18, 21-23], 15 [15], 16 [32].

The reason why true Christians have always been able to accomplish so much under the most difficult conditions and in the most lonely spots is that they are never in reality alone. An isolated Christian is an impossibility even in solitary confinement. He has always the companionship of another personality—God.

FOURTH DAY

"For Whosoever Shall do the Will of My Father Who is in Heaven, He is My Brother, and Sister, and Mother"

Matt. 12 [50].

"Yes, *my* brother, and *my* sister, and *my* mother. . . . . Some young man here is suffering fierce temptation. Today he feels strong but tomorrow his Sabbath resolutions will desert him. What will his companions say if he does not join them? He cannot face them if he is to play the Christian. Companions! What are all the companions in the world to this? What are all the friendships, the truest and the best, to the dear and sacred brotherhood of Christ? 'He that doeth the will of my Father the same is *my* brother.' "

DRUMMOND: *The Ideal Life, pages 235, 236.*

Study XXIV. The Issues of Obedience. (d) Constant Companionship

FIFTH DAY

The Relation of Obedience to Fellowship with God

Rev. 3 [20]; John 12 [26]; I John 1 [3, 6, 7], 2 [4].

Purity. Matt. 5 [8].
Honesty. Rev. 22 [15].
Unselfishness. Heb. 12 [14].
Love. Matt. 25 [41-46]; I John 4 [12].

"Study yesterday in order to learn wisdom for tomorrow, but when the lesson has been learned study it no longer. We ought to learn wisdom from our mistakes; we ought to acquire virtues from our sins. Why this act of folly which we lament? Spend no time in repining; but spend all the time that is necessary in order to learn its lesson. Was it due to vanity? or greed? or appetite? or self-conceit? or a weak and wayward will? Find out. Then be on guard against the same enemy to your honor when he attacks you at a new point and under new circumstances. We all make mistakes; we all commit transgressions. But we ought not to repeat the same mistakes—that is to blunder; we ought not to commit the same transgressions—that is doubly dishonorable. Forget the things which are behind, and stretch forward to the things which are before. . . . . No man ought to allow the memory of the past to prevent his peace and joy in present fellowship with God."

Abbott: *The Great Companion, pages 137-139.*

Study XXIV. The Issues of Obedience. (d) Constant Companionship

SIXTH DAY

"Lo, I am with You Alway"

Matt. 18 [20], 28 [20]; I John 1 [3].

What a motive to the highest and noblest in life this promise is! We are never alone. Is this too great a thought for me to realize—Jesus by my side as I write, in the lecture room with me tomorrow, on the train as I journey alone?

"This is the value of those quiet hours which the night sometimes affords us. Insomnia has lost its dread since I learned the meaning of the Psalmist's declaration: 'My mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips when I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night watches.' The man who spends his sleepless hours in such remembrance makes them joyful hours. He does not lie tossing to and fro, wondering whether he shall ever fall asleep again, anxious lest he shall prove unfitted for the morrow's duties, trying to put himself to sleep by endless combinations of numbers or by repeating senseless rhymes: he lies restfully and reads in the book of his remembrance the record of his Father's love, or looks calmly at the morrow's duties or the morrow's perils because he looks at them through his Father's eyes, or communes with his own heart and in its uninterpretable experiences hears the voice of his Father, or simply is still and knows that God is God."

ABBOTT: *The Great Companion, pages 157, 158.*

Study XXIV. The Issues of Obedience. (d) Constant Companionship

SEVENTH DAY—REVIEW

1. Does God reveal himself to mankind today in the same way as before the incarnation?

2. What is the meaning of John 20 [29]?

3. What passages in Paul's letters attest a living fellowship with God?

STUDY XXV

The Issues of Obedience—E. Eternal Life

"And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever." —*I John 2:17.*

"Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven." —*Matt. 7:21.*

"And this is the will of him that sent me, that of all that which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day. For this is the will of my Father, that everyone that beholdeth the Son, and believeth on him, should have eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day." —*John 6:39,40.*

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my word, he shall never see death." —*John 8:51.*

"He that soweth unto the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap eternal life." —*Gal. 6:8.*

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Study XXV. The Issues of Obedience. (e) Eternal Life

FIRST DAY

The Power of an Endless Life

Rom. 6 [23]; Heb. 2 [14, 15], 7 [16].

"The difference between the mortal and immortal life is not made by death. The immortal life is the life which pain, sickness, and death cannot terminate. It is the life of faith, of hope, of love. Such life is immortal life, because mortality cannot touch it. The body is always dying; it is in an ever-perpetual process of decay; but the spirit of faith, hope, and love is in no process of decay; it is not mortal. It is eternal because it stands in no time-relation. . . . . Christ was as immortal when hanging apparently helpless on the cross as when he rose from the tomb."

ABBOTT: *The Other Room, pages 99, 100.*

Study XXV. The Issues of Obedience. (e) Eternal Life

SECOND DAY

Eternal Life may Begin Here and Now on This Earth through the Act of Obedience

Rom. 6 [4, 8, 11, 13]; I Tim. 6 [12, 19]; II Tim. 1 [10].
Luke 10 [20], 17 [21]; Heb. 11 [5], 12 [1], 13 [14]; Rev. 21 [3].
John 3 [14, 15, 16, 36], 4 [14], 5 [24-40], 6 [54-57, 63], 8 [51], 10 [27, 28], 11 [25, 26], 17 [3]; I John 2 [25], 3 [14], 5 [11, 12, 20].

"Not all men wish for immortality. They wish to live forever, but living forever is not immortality. Immortality is living the life that cannot die, because it is the life of the spirit. If we wish to believe in such a life as a life hereafter, we must believe in it as the life worth living here; if we wish to possess it hereafter, we must wish to possess it here. Do we? . . . . If I would have a right to the tree of life, if I would have a right to know that there is a tree of life, I must seek this immortal life here, and seek it from the God who is here, and seek it through the channel that he opens for us. . . . . If we are to pluck the fruit from the tree of life, we must have a right to it. If we would have a rational hope in life hereafter, we must have the immortal life here. To have faith in immortality we must practice immortality."

ABBOTT: *Ibid., pages 101-107 (passim).*

Study XXV. The Issues of Obedience. (e) Eternal Life

THIRD DAY

The Evidences of Eternal Life Which We may Enjoy through Obedience Here and Now (Rom. 14: 17). (a) The Freedom of Righteousness

Gal. 2 [4], 5 [1, 13]; I Cor. 10 [29]; II Cor. 3 [17]; Rom. 8 [2, 21], 14 [17].

James 1 [25], 2 [12]; I Peter 2 [15, 16]; John 8 [31, 32, 36]; I John 4 [17, 18].

Study carefully the Scripture passages given for this day's study, grouping your results under the heads of—

(a) The exact meaning of Freedom.

(b) How is it to be obtained?

(c) The results of its possession on the individual.

Study XXV. The Issues of Obedience. (e) Eternal Life

FOURTH DAY

The Evidences of Eternal Life Which We may Enjoy through Obedience Here and Now (Rom. 14: 17). (b) Joy

Rom. 14 [17]; Matt. 6 [22]; Acts 2 [46, 47].
Heb. 1 [9]; I Peter 1 [8]; John 15 [11], 16 [20-24], 17 [13].
I John 1 [4].

(Follow directions under *Third Day* substituting "Joy" for "Freedom.")

Study XXV. The Issues of Obedience. (e) Eternal Life

FIFTH DAY

The Evidences of Eternal Life Which We may Enjoy through Obedience Here and Now (Rom. 14: 17). (c) Peace

I Cor. 7 [15]b; Rom. 5 [1], 8 [6], 14 [17]; Luke 2 [14], 19 [41, 42].
Acts 3 [19], 9 [31]b; John 14 [27], 16 [33].

(Follow directions under *Third Day,* substituting "Peace" for "Freedom.")

Study XXV. The Issues of Obedience. (e) Eternal Life

SIXTH DAY

"He That Doeth the Will of God Abideth Forever"

I John 2 [17].

Can we even faintly grasp the full meaning of these words, "He that doeth the will of God abideth forever"? Abideth how? In infinite knowledge, with infinite provision made for all wants, with infinite power to achieve and opportunity for development, in everlasting companionship, in perfect freedom, perfect joy, perfect peace.

No man, who through the deliberate act of surrender of the human will to absolute standards of purity, honesty, unselfishness and love, has once felt the coursing of these immortal powers in his spirit can ever after find any experience of this new life tame or commonplace.

Why should we hesitate to make the act of enlistment or surrender complete? Just the other side of complete surrender is God and the power of an endless life.

"Laid on thine altar, O my Lord divine,
Accept this gift today for Jesus' sake:
I have no jewels to adorn thy shrine,
No far-famed sacrifice to make;
But here within my trembling hand I bring
This will of mine—a thing that seemeth small.
But thou alone, O Lord, canst understand
How when I yield thee this, I yield mine all.

"Hidden within, thy searching gaze can see
Struggles of passion, visions of delight,
All that I have or am or fain would be—
Deep loves, fond hopes and longings infinite.
It has been wet with tears and hushed with sighs,
Crushed in my grasp till beauty it hath none;
Now from thy footstool where it vanquished lies,
The prayer ascendeth, 'May thy will be done.'

"Take it, O Father, ere my courage fail,
And merge it so in thine own will, that e'en
If in some desperate hour my cries prevail
And thou give back my gift it may have been
So changed, so purified, so fair have grown,
So one with thee, so filled with grace divine,
I may not feel or know it as my own,
But, gaining back my will, may find it *thine*."

Study XXV. The Issues of Obedience. (e) Eternal Life

SEVENTH DAY—CONCLUSION

"Now the God of peace, who brought again from the dead the great shepherd of the sheep with the blood of an eternal covenant, even our Lord Jesus, make you perfect in every good thing to do his will, working in us that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be the glory, forever and ever. Amen."

—*Hebrews 13:20, 21.*

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